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Goethe, JOHANN WOLFGANG von.

THE

AUTO-BIOGRAPHY OF GOETHE.

TRUTH AND POETRY: FROM MY LIFE.

EDITED

BY PARKE GODWIN.

IN TWO VOLS.

VOL. II.

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THE
AUTO-BIOGRAPHY OF GOETHE.

TRUTH AND POETRY: FROM MY LIFE.

EDITED
BY PARKE GODWIN.

IN TWO VOLS.

VOL. II.

Was man in der Jugend wünscht, hat man im Alter der Fülle.

NEW YORK:
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1849.

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P R E F A C E .

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In the treatment of a multifarious Biography like this, which we have dared to undertake, we are obliged, if we would make certain events intelligible and readable, to separate things which concur in respect to time ; to concentrate others which can only be comprehended in their succession, and in this way to bring together the whole, in parts, which we can judge of and appropriate as we look them over.

With this remark we open the present volume, and let it contribute to the justification of our proceeding, while we add the request that our readers will consider the narrative herein resumed as not connected immediately with the end of the preceding book, but that it proposes to take up the principal threads together, by degrees, and present persons, as well as opinions and actions, in a fair and well founded sequence.

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TRUTH AND POETRY;

FROM MY OWN LIFE.

ELEVENTH BOOK.

AFTER I had finished my story in the bower at Sesenheim, in which I had pleasantly enough mingled the ordinary with the impossible, I saw that my fair hearers, who before had seemed especially interested, were quite fascinated with the strange narrative. They begged me earnestly to write it out for them, so that they might often read it over to themselves and to others. I promised to do so the more willingly, as by that means I hoped to find an excuse for a repetition of my visit, and opportunity for a more intimate acquaintance with them. The circle broke up for a moment, and all might have felt that after so exciting a day the evening would be somewhat dull. My friend relieved me from anxiety on this head by asking permission for us to take leave at once, because he, as an industrious and attentive academician, wished to pass the night in Drusenheim, and to be at Strasburg early the next morning.

We both reached our lodgings in silence; I because I felt a grapple holding upon my heart and drawing me back, and he because he had something else in mind which he imparted to me as soon as we had arrived.

"It is strange," he began, "that you fell upon this very story. Did you not perceive that it made a peculiar impression?"

"Certainly," I answered; "how could I help perceiving that at some places the elder laughed more than was natural, and the younger shook her head; that you looked significantly at each other, and that you yourself almost lost your self-possession. I do not deny that it nearly put me out of my story; for it oc-

curred to me that perhaps it was improper to tell the good children silly things which they had better remain ignorant of, and to give them such mean ideas of men as they must necessarily form of the adventurer."

"Not at all," he replied, "you do not guess it, and how should you? The good children are not by any means so ignorant of such things as you suppose, for the society around them gives abundant occasion for reflection; besides, just over the Rhine there is exactly such a married pair as you in your exaggerated and fabulous style described. The husband just as big, solid, and clumsy; and the wife small and pretty enough for him to carry her in his hand. Their whole relation and history suit your narrative so precisely, that the girls asked me seriously if you knew the persons and described them in jest; I assured them that you did not, and you will do well to leave the story unwritten. By delays and pretences we will find an excuse."

I was surprised: for I had thought of no married pair on either bank of the Rhine, nor could I ever have told how the story had occurred to me. In fancy I like to amuse myself with such things, without reference to any one, and I supposed it would be so with others when I told them.

When I had returned to my employments in the city, I felt the fatigue of them more than before; for the man who is born to activity attempts many plans, and overburdens himself with labors. All goes on well till some physical or moral impediment arises, and shows clearly the disproportion of his powers to his undertakings.

The study of law I pursued with sufficient industry to gain my degree with honor; medicine attracted me because it allowed me to discover Nature, if it did not unfold her to me on all sides; besides, I was attached to it through the influence of my companions and habit; to society I was also obliged to give some time and attention, for in several families great kindness and politeness had been shown me. But I might have borne all this, and gone on with it, if what Herder had enjoined had not weighed upon me insupportably. He had torn away the curtain which concealed the poverty of German literature; he had sternly destroyed so many of my prejudices; in my native sky but few

stars of any importance were remaining, while he treated all the rest only as flickering candle-wicks ; he had even so changed the aspect of what I might hope and imagine for myself that I began to doubt my own faculties. At the same time, nevertheless, he urged me forward upon the noble, broad path which he himself loved to travel, pointed me to his own favorite writers, among whom Swift and Hamann were the chief, and roused me more powerfully than he had weakened me. In addition to these manifold disturbances came a rising passion, which, while it threatened to swallow me up, could indeed distract me from these things, but could hardly raise me above them. A physical difficulty also now commenced. After eating, my throat seemed to be laced up. From this I afterwards recovered very easily, by giving up a kind of red wine which we had been accustomed to drink at our boarding-house, and which I was fond of. This intolerable inconvenience had left me at Sesenheim, so that I there enjoyed myself doubly, but when I returned to my city diet it came back immediately, to my great chagrin. All this made me thoughtful and peevish, and my external appearance corresponded to what was within.

More out of humor than ever, because immediately after eating, the difficulty in my throat was very troublesome, I attended the clinical lectures. The cheerful and agreeable manner with which the honored teacher led us from bed to bed, the careful observations of the important symptoms, the decision as to the progress of the disease, the fine Hippocratic method by which, without theorizing, he produced from his own experience the elements of knowledge, the perorations with which he used to crown his lessons, drew me to him, and made a pursuit which was not my own, and which I looked upon through a crevice as it were, so much the more attractive. My aversion to the sick decreased constantly, as I learned to convert their circumstances into principles through which healing, the restoration of the human form and activity, appeared possible. He had, doubtless, noticed me particularly as an eccentric young man, and had forgiven the strange anomaly that brought me to his lessons. This time he closed his lecture, not as usual with a maxim relating to some disease which we had been observing, but said in a cheerful way :

“ Gentlemen ! we see a vacation before us ; use it to recreate yourselves. Your studies should be pursued not only with earnestness and industry, but with cheerfulness and freedom of mind. Let your bodies also have exercise ; travel through the beautiful country on foot and on horseback. Those of you who are natives in it will enjoy a pleasure to which you have been accustomed ; the strangers will receive new impressions which will leave an agreeable recollection behind.”

There were only two of us to whom this admonition could be addressed ; I trust the other was as much impressed by it as I. I thought it was a voice from Heaven that I was listening to, and hastened as fast as I could to engage a horse and to dress myself befittingly. I sent for Weyland, but he was not to be found. This did not alter my determination, but unfortunately the preparations were delayed, and I did not get away so soon as I had hoped. I rode violently, but yet night overtook me. The way was easy to find, and the moon gave her light to my passionate enterprise. The night was windy and boisterous, and I urged my horse to the top of his speed, so that I need not wait till morning to see her.

It was already late when I left my horse at Sesenheim. The landlord, upon my inquiry if there were still a light in the parsonage, assured me that the ladies had just gone home ; he thought he had heard that they were expecting a stranger. That did not please me, for I wished to be the only one. I hastened, in order, as late as it was, at least to appear the first. I found both sisters sitting before the door ; they did not seem so much surprised as I ; Frederica whispered to Olivia, loud enough for me to hear, “ Did I not tell you ? there he is.” They led me in and I found a little collation prepared. The mother greeted me as an old acquaintance ; but when the elder sister saw me by the light, she broke out into loud laughter, for she had but little power of self-control.

After this first rather strange reception the conversation became free and lively, and what I did not then learn I found out the next morning. Frederica had said beforehand that I should come, and who does not feel a satisfaction at the fulfilment of an anticipation, even if it be a gloomy one ? All presentiments

that are confirmed by events give man a higher idea of himself, whether he thus believes his sensibilities so delicate as to feel what is still in the distance, or thinks himself sharp-sighted enough to perceive the necessary, though still uncertain, consequences of what has already taken place. Neither did Olivia's laughing remain a mystery; she confessed that it seemed very comical to her to see me this time well dressed and according to the fashion; Frederica, on the other hand, preferred not to attribute my present appearance to vanity, but rather to see in it the desire to please her.

Betimes in the morning Frederica invited me to a walk; her mother and sister were busy preparing everything for the reception of several friends. At the side of the dear girl I enjoyed the magnificent Sunday morning in the country, such as our inestimable Hebel has represented it. She described to me the expected company, and asked me to assist her. It was her desire that all enjoyments should if possible be had in common, and in a certain order.

"Usually," she said, "people amuse themselves separately; social games are only touched on, so that for a part of the company at last nothing remains but cards, while the others can only exhaust themselves in dancing."

Accordingly we formed our plan as to what should be done before and after dinner, made each other acquainted with new games, and were satisfied and of the same opinion when the bell called us to church, where, at her side, I found a rather dry sermon of her father's not too long.

In the presence of a beloved person time always passes swiftly, but for me this hour went by in serious reflection. I recalled to myself the fine qualities which she so fully displayed; thoughtful cheerfulness, naivety with self-possession, liveliness with good sense; peculiarities which seemed in themselves irreconcilable, but which were united in her, and gave a most charming expression to her face and person. Besides I had some earnest considerations about myself in my mind which did not permit an expansive gaiety.

Since that passionate girl had hallowed my lips, and affixed a curse to them—for consecration always contains both—I had

superstitiously taken care in no case to be betrayed into a kiss, for fear that any maiden on whom it might be bestowed would thereby suffer some unheard of spiritual injury. For this reason I overcame every impulse by which a young man is inclined to gain from a pretty girl this favor, of much or little significance as the case may be. But even in the most strict society a severe trial awaited me. The more or less ingenious little games, as they are called, which serve to collect and unite a gay circle of young people, are for the most part founded on pawns, in the redemption of which kisses have no insignificant value. I had, once for all, determined to kiss no one, and as any want or hindrance excites us to a kind of activity, to which we should otherwise have no inclination, I put forth all the talent and humor I had to escape this sentence and to make the company a gainer by my efforts, while I lost nothing in their good opinion. When a verse was needed for the ransom of a pledge the demand generally fell on me. For this I was always prepared, and on such occasions brought forward something in praise of the hostess or of some lady who had treated me with special politeness. Whenever it happened that a kiss was imposed on me I endeavored to escape by some evasion that should give equal satisfaction. When I had had time to think about it beforehand I was always provided with all sorts of such stratagems, but those which came on the spur of the moment were sure to be most successful.

When we got back to the house, the guests had arrived, and were already confusedly chatting in high glee. Frederica collected them together, and invited them to walk to a beautiful place, and herself led the way. There we found a plentiful luncheon, and with social amusements awaited the hour of dinner. Here, with the assistance of Frederica, though she had no idea of my secret, I succeeded in inventing and carrying through games without pawns, and redemption of pawns without kisses.

My readiness and dexterity were so much the more needful, to prevent the company, to which I was before a total stranger, from perceiving a relation between me and the dear girl, and, in jest, taking pains to compel me to that which secretly I was endeavoring to avoid. For, whenever, in such circles, young persons are detected in a rising attachment, there is an attempt to embar-

·rass them, or to bring them nearer together, just as afterwards, when their passion is declared, to separate them from each other; for it is perfectly indifferent to the man of society whether he does good or ill, if he is only entertained.

This morning, with some attention, I seemed to perceive Frederica's whole nature. Through the whole time she made upon me the same impression. The friendly greetings of the peasants, directed especially to her, showed that she was a benefactor to them, and that they met her with pleasure. At home, the elder sister was the assistant of the mother; of Frederica nothing was asked that required physical exertion. She was spared this, as they said, on account of her chest.

There are women who are peculiarly pleasing in the house, others who are more remarkable in the open air,—Frederica belonged to the latter. Her appearance, her form, were never more charming than when she moved along a rising foot-path. The grace of her bearing then seemed to rival the flowery earth, and the constant gaiety of her face the blue of heaven. This refreshing aura which surrounded her she also brought home with her. There it soon appeared that she knew how to bring confusion into order, and could easily remove the impression of little unpleasant accidents.

The purest joy that we can experience in one we love is to see that person a source of happiness to others. In society Frederica gave pleasure to every one. On walks, like an enlivening spirit, she seemed to hover hither and thither, and to know how to fill up any gap that might occur. The lightness of her motions I have already spoken of; when running she was most graceful. As the roe appears entirely to fulfil its destiny when bounding lightly over the shooting corn, so she seemed most clearly and completely to express herself when, with quick foot, she hastened over ridge and hollow to get something that was forgotten, to seek something lost, to give some necessary directions, or to call up a pair that had fallen behind. At such times she never got out of breath nor became exhausted, for which reason the great anxiety of her parents about her chest seemed to many persons exaggerated.

The father, who frequently accompanied us through meadows

and fields, was often not fortunate in his companions. For this reason I joined him, when he did not fail to bring forward his favorite theme, and to entertain me with a minute account of the proposed building for the parsonage. Especially he lamented that he could not again obtain the carefully prepared design, in order to reflect upon it, and to consider various improvements. Hereupon I answered that its place could easily be supplied. I offered to prepare a plan, and to make it a matter of immediate and special concern. With this he was entirely content, and at once hastened to enlist the schoolmaster, whose assistance would be wanted in the necessary measurement,—which he did to such purpose that early next morning the foot and inch measure was all ready.

When he had gone, Frederica said to me :

“You are very good to treat father’s weak side so kindly, and not, like the others who are tired of this subject, avoid him or interrupt him. But I must confess to you that the rest of us do not wish for the building ; it would be too expensive for the congregation and for us too. New house, new furniture ! Our friends would be no happier with us,—they are accustomed to the old building. Here we can entertain them abundantly, but there, in a wider space, we should find ourselves confined. So stands the matter ; but do not cease your kindness to father : I thank you for it most heartily.”

Another lady who had joined us inquired about some romances, —if Frederica had read them. She said, no. In fact she had read but little ; she had grown up in a cheerful, social enjoyment of life, and according to this she was developed. I had the Vicar of Wakefield upon my tongue, but did not venture to offer it to her ; the similarity of circumstances was too striking and too significant.

“I like to read novels,” said she, “one finds in them such fine people, whom one would like to resemble.”

The measuring for the house took place next morning. It went on quite slowly, for I was as little skilled in such arts as the schoolmaster. At last a tolerable draught was accomplished. The good father told me his intentions, and was not sorry as I took leave in order to prepare the design which could more con-

veniently be done in the city. From Frederica I parted happily ; she was convinced of my inclination as I of hers, and the six hours' ride no longer seemed to separate us. It was so easy to reach Drusenheim by the diligence, and keep up our intimacy by means of it, as well as by ordinary and extraordinary messengers, of whom George was to be the forwarder.

When I arrived in the city I busied myself during the earliest hours of the morning—for late sleep was no longer to be thought of—with the plans, which I drew as neatly as possible. Meanwhile I had sent her books, and with them written a short, friendly word. The answer came at once, and I was delighted with her delicate, neat, cordial hand. So, too, the contents and style were throughout natural and easy, and evinced an affectionate disposition ; and thus the agreeable impression she had made on me was maintained and renewed. I dwelt but too constantly upon the attractions of her charming nature, and nourished the hope of seeing her soon again, and for a longer period.

I no longer needed any spur from my noble teacher ; his timely words had so radically cured me, that I had no desire to see him and his sick patients without some occasion. My correspondence with Frederica grew more animated. She invited me to a fête to which some friends from beyond the Rhine were also coming ; she wished me to remain for some time ; I put a heavy portmanteau on board the diligence, and in a few hours I was with her. I found a large and merry company ; I took the father aside and gave him the design, with which he was delighted ; I told him what I had thought about the execution of it. He was beside himself with joy, and especially praised the neatness of the drawing, an art which I had practised from my youth—for this time I had also provided the finest paper and taken great pains. But the satisfaction of our good host was soon overclouded, for, contrary to my advice, in the joy of his heart, he showed the plan to the company. Far from manifesting the desired sympathy, they paid no regard to my precious labor. Some of them who fancied they understood the subject did yet worse, they blamed the design as not according to the rules of art ; and, while the old gentleman for an instant took his eyes off it, they treated it as if it had been merely a rough draught, and one of them scratched

the amendments he suggested in heavy pencil marks so roughly upon the delicate paper, that a restoration of its first neatness was not to be thought of.

The most earnest assurances that I regarded it only as a sketch, to be discussed and to serve as the basis of future drawings, could hardly console the irritated man whose pleasure had so rudely been destroyed. In spite of all, he went away in great vexation, and Frederica thanked me for my politeness to her father, as well as for my patience with the incivility of the other guests.

But when near her I could not feel either pain or vexation. The company consisted of friends, young and pretty noisy, whom an old gentleman who was present endeavored to outdo in extravagance. The wine had not been spared at breakfast ; at an abundant dinner-table there was no lack of attractive viands, and, after exciting exercise in a tolerably warm atmosphere, our appetite was not deficient in keenness, and if the old gentleman had gone a little beyond bounds, the young people had not been far behind him.

My happiness at the side of Frederica was without limits. I was talkative, gay, witty, loud, but still restrained by sentiments of reverence and attachment. She was also open, joyous, sympathetic, and communicative. We appeared to live solely for the company, and yet lived mutually for each other alone.

After dinner all sought the shade ; social games were brought forward, and pawns followed of course. In their redemption there was no moderation of any sort. The gestures which were demanded, the actions which were required to be performed, the enigmas to be solved, all came from an unrestrained, unlimited mirthfulness. I myself heightened this wild pleasantry by ready jokes, and Frederica shone in many a comical fancy ; she seemed to me more lovely than ever ; all my hypochondriacal, superstitious notions had disappeared, and when occasion offered to kiss most heartily her I loved with such tenderness I did not refrain, and still less did I deny myself the repetition of this pleasure.

The wish of the company for music was at last gratified ; at the sound all hastened to the dance. Waltzing was the beginning, middle, and end. With this national dance every one was acquainted. I did great honor to my private instructress, and Fre-

derica who danced as she walked, spoke, and ran, was glad to find in me a skilful partner. We dauced together for the most part, but soon had to stop, because on all sides they told her that she must put an end to her excited frolicking. We compensated ourselves with a lonely walk hand in hand, and, in that well-known retired place, with the most tender embraces and the truest assurances that we loved each other entirely.

We returned with some of the more elderly persons who had left the games. At supper the company had not yet come to themselves; the dancing was kept up till a late hour, and healths and other incitements to drinking were as abundant as at noon.

I had been but few hours in deep sleep when my heated and excited blood awoke me. It is in such hours and such situations that anxiety and remorse are wont to fall upon the unprotected mortal. My imagination set before me the most lively images. I saw Lucinda as she stepped back from me after that most impassioned kiss, and with glowing cheeks and flashing eyes uttered the imprecation which was intended only for her sister, but with which she unconsciously threatened innocent strangers. I saw Frederica standing opposite to her, chilled by her glance, pale, and feeling the consequences of a curse, of which she knew nothing; I was between them, unable to prevent the spiritual effects of the adventure, or to avoid the kiss so prophetic of evil. The delicate health of Frederica seemed likely to hasten the threatened misfortune, and her love for me now came to my mind as most unhappy; I wished myself beyond all the mountains.

But I will not conceal what in the background was yet more painful. A certain fancy had favored the superstition; my lips—consecrated or cursed—were thus of greater importance, and I found no little cause for self-approbation in the consciousness of my abstinence and the renunciation of many innocent joys, partly to preserve that magical superiority, partly not to injure innocent creatures by giving it up.

But now all was lost and irreparable; I had fallen into the condition of ordinary mortals. I imagined that I had injured the dearest of all beings, that I had done her a harm which could not be amended; and so, instead of being free from the curse, it had struck from my lips back into my own heart.

All these things together raged in my blood, excited by passionate love, by wine and dancing, confused my thoughts, and pained me so that, in comparison with the delight of yesterday, I was in boundless despair. Fortunately the daylight fell upon me through a crevice in the shutter ; the rising sun, conquering all the powers of night, placed me again upon my feet ; I was soon in the open air and refreshed, if not entirely restored.

Superstition, like many other weaknesses, loses its power, if, instead of flattering our vanity, it comes in its way and endeavors to cause any pain to this tender creature. We then see clearly that we can be free from it as soon as we wish, and we banish it the more easily, the more everything we take from its grasp tends to our advantage. The sight of Frederica, the impression of her love, the cheerfulness of all around me, all reproved me for having entertained such gloomy night-birds in the midst of the happiest days ; I believed I had driven them away for ever. The manner of the dear girl, ever more confiding and intimate, made me entirely joyous, and when, on leaving, she kissed me openly, as she did her relatives and other friends, I was completely happy.

In the city, numerous affairs and distractions awaited me ; from these I often brought myself back to my beloved, by means of a constant correspondence. In her letters she was always the same ; when she told any news, alluded to well-known events, in her transient pictures and passing reflections, it always seemed as if going, coming, running, leaping with the pen, her step was as light as it was certain. I took the greatest pleasure in writing to her ; the recollection of her excellent and charming qualities increased my attachment, even when away from her. Meeting her in this manner was but little inferior to seeing her personally, and, indeed, afterwards became even dearer and more agreeable.

My old superstition had been fully put to flight. It was founded, indeed, upon the impression of earlier years, but the spirit of the time, the quick impulses of youth, intercourse with intelligent men, were all unfavorable to it. It would not have been easy to find any one among my acquaintances to whom the confession of the idea would not have appeared perfectly ridiculous. But the worst was, that the disappearance of this foolish notion

left behind it a view of the condition of those young persons whose early attachments can promise no permanent results. It was of little advantage to me to be freed from an error, when understanding and reflection became yet worse companions. My passion increased the better I learned the worth of the admirable girl, and the time drew near when I must lose what was so beautiful, so dear to me, perhaps for ever.

A long time had passed in quiet and delightful intercourse, when, from love of mischief, my friend Weyland brought the Vicar of Wakefield to Sesenheim, and, reading aloud being spoken of, unexpectedly handed it to me as if it were of no peculiar significance. I collected myself, and read in as easy, unembarrassed a manner as I could. The countenances of my hearers grew cheerful as I read, and the repeated comparison seemed to force itself not unpleasantly upon them. As they had found comic counterparts to Raymond and Melusine, they here saw themselves in a mirror which by no means disfigured them. They did not confess it expressly, but there was no denial that they were introduced among their relatives in mind and feeling.

All men of elevated nature, in the course of their development, acquire the consciousness that they have a double part to play in the world—an actual and an ideal, and in this feeling the ground of all nobleness is to be looked for. Of the actual part allotted to us we have quite too clear a knowledge ; of the ideal, we seldom gain distinct perceptions. Man may seek his higher destiny on earth or in heaven, in the present or in the future ; he is yet, with regard to it, always the subject of perpetual, internal uncertainty, and of a ceaseless disturbing influence from without, till he once for all determines to regard that as right which is adapted to his character and abilities.

Among the most pardonable attempts to invest one's self with higher qualities, and to find in one's self a resemblance to a person of more lofty attributes, is the youthful impulse to assume the place of novel heroes. It is most innocent, and, whatever may be said against it, does no injury at all. It amuses us at times when we should be overwhelmed with tedium, or should be driven to some more passionate occupation.

How often we hear repeated the litany of the evils of romances.

Is it then a misfortune if a pretty girl or fine young man put themselves in the stead of a person who has better and worse experiences than they ? Is our common life of such great value, or do the necessities of the day devour the man so completely, that he must deny every beautiful inclination ?

In this way we must, without doubt, regard the historical-poetical Christian names which, to the frequent grief of the officiating clergyman, make their way into the places of the saints in the German Church, as side branches of the romantic-poetic fictions. This inclination to confer nobility upon a child, by a harmonious name, is praiseworthy, even if it had no other consequence ; and this combination of an imaginary with the actual world, spreads a kind of pleasant light over the whole life of the person. We should think we had injured a beautiful child which we take pleasure in calling Bertha, if we should name it Urselblandine. Certainly such a name would stick fast in the lips of a cultivated man, to say nothing of a lover. The cold world, whose judgments are always one-sided, is not to be blamed if it considers everything that appears fanciful as ridiculous and contemptible ; it is for the thoughtful knower of mankind to esteem it according to its own value.

This comparison, brought about by a roguish jest, had the most delightful results for the lovers on the beautiful banks of the Rhine. When we see our own faces in a mirror we do not think about them, but perceive them and let them pass for what they may. The case is the same with those moral images, in which we recognise our own manners and inclinations, our customs and peculiarities, as it were in shadow, and, with fraternal warmth, endeavor to lay hold of and embrace them.

The habit of being together grew more constant ; there was no thought that I did not belong to their circle. It was allowed to rise and proceed without inquiry as to what it would end in. Some parents are compelled to permit their sons and daughters to go on for a time in such fluctuating conditions, till at last by accident, something is established for life better than a long devised plan could have produced.

They had the fullest confidence in Frederica's judgment, as well as in my rectitude, of which, from my strangely refraining

even from innocent caresses, they had formed a favorable opinion. We were left unobserved as was then, and in that place generally, the custom ; we could take long walks with few or many companions, and visit our friends in the neighborhood at our own pleasure. On both sides of the Rhine, in Hagenau, Fort Louis, Philipsburg, Ortenau, I found the persons separately whom I had seen together at Sesenheim, most hospitable and friendly hosts, and taking pleasure in throwing open the whole country, as well as their kitchens, cellars, gardens, and vineyards. The islands of the Rhine were also often the goal of our boat excursions. We condemned the cool dwellers in the clear river, without mercy, to the kettle, to the gridiron, to the simmering butter, and on one occasion might have taken a longer lease than was proper of the friendly fishermen's huts, had not the frightful Rhine snakes driven us away after a few hours. At this intolerable interruption of a most delightful pleasure party, when all else favored us, where the affection of the lovers seemed to increase with the good fortune of the expedition, I actually broke out in the presence of the good old clergyman, into blasphemous expressions. As we came home too early, unprepared, and at an inconvenient hour, I declared that these snakes alone could in my mind refute the idea that a good and wise God had created the world. The pious old gentleman thereupon called me earnestly to order, and gave me to understand that these vermin and monsters did not appear till after the fall of our first parents, or that if there had been such things in Paradise they could only have rustled agreeably, but could not have had the power of biting. I was at once appeased, for an angry person is easily soothed if we can succeed in making him laugh. I replied that there was no need of the angel with the flaming sword, to drive the sinful pair from the Garden ; I must be allowed to suppose, that it was done by great snakes from the Tigris and Euphrates. In this way I brought the good man to laughing, for he understood a jest, or at least suffered one to pass.

More earnest, and more elevating to the heart, was the enjoyment of the various seasons of the day and year in this splendid region. I needed only to yield myself to the present to feel the

clearness of the sky, the glory of the rich earth, the soft twilight, the warm evenings, at the side of my beloved or near her. For whole months we were favored with pure ethereal mornings, when the heavens shone in their full magnificence, and the earth was overflowing with dew. To prevent the spectacle from becoming monotonous, the clouds often piled themselves above the mountains, now in this direction, now in that. There they stood days and weeks, without darkening the pure sky; while even the passing storms refreshed the earth, and gave a new lustre to its green robes, which gleamed again in the sunshine, before they were yet dry. The double rainbows, the twin-colored hems of the dark grey, almost black veil of the heavens, were more splendid, of richer color, more distinct, but also less permanent than I had ever seen them elsewhere.

Thus environed, my poetic faculty, which I had long had no desire to employ, came again into action. I wrote songs for Frederica to many well known melodies. They would have made a pretty volume; but few of them are remaining: they can easily be found among my others.

Since I was often obliged, on account of my peculiar studies, and for other purposes, to return to the city, there arose a new life for our attachment. By this we were protected from everything disagreeable and vexatious, which is wont to be connected with such little love affairs. When absent from me she labored for me, and thought of some new entertainment for my return; I no less occupied myself for her, so that I might seem new to her by some new gift, and some new thought. Painted ribbons had then just come in fashion; I painted her a few pieces and sent them out with a little poem, as at that time I had to stay away longer than I had expected. In order, also, to do more than keep my promise to the father, of a new and elaborate plan for the building, I persuaded a young architect to do it, instead of myself. He undertook it both from pleasure in the work and from a desire to oblige me; he was also inspired by the hope of a favorable reception in so pleasant a family. He prepared a ground plan, elevation, and section of the house; the door-yard, and gardens, were not forgotten, and a detailed but very moderate

estimate was added, representing the execution of an extensive undertaking as easy and feasible.

These evidences of our friendly exertions procured us the kindest reception ; when the good father saw that we had the best will to serve him, he brought forward another wish ; it was to see his chaise which, though very neat, was of but one color, adorned with flowers and ornaments. For this we were all ready. Colors, pencils, and whatever else was necessary, were brought from the shops of the next village. But there was no lack of a failure after the fashion of Wakefield. When we had painted all with the greatest industry, and in the greatest variety, we discovered that we had used the wrong kind of varnish. It would not dry ; sunshine and wind, clear and damp weather, were all alike ineffectual. They were obliged to use an old carriage in the meanwhile, and nothing was to be done but to rub off our ornamental work, with much greater care and labor than we had put it on. Our dislike for this duty was not a little increased, when the girls begged us for heaven's sake to do it slowly and with the greatest caution, so as not to injure the ground, which indeed, after the operation, could not be restored to its original lustre.

But our cheerfulness was no more disturbed by the intervention of these little accidents than that of Dr. Primrose and his family. Many a piece of unexpected good fortune chanced to us as well as to our friends and neighbors. Weddings and christenings, the arrangement of some new house, an inheritance, success in a lottery, were mutually communicated and enjoyed. We partook of all joys as of a common possession, and knew how to increase them by ingenuity and by love. If it was not the first or last time that I have been intimate in families at the period of their highest bloom, and if I might flatter myself that I have contributed to the brightness of such epochs, I must on the other hand reproach myself that for that very reason they have passed more rapidly and have sooner vanished.

Our love now had to undergo a peculiar trial. I will call it a trial, though that is not exactly the right word. The country family whose friendship I had gained had relatives in the city of high respectability, and in good circumstances. The young

people from the city were often at Sesenheim. The elders,—mothers and aunts, who were more confined at home,—heard so much of the life there, of the increasing beauty of the daughters, and even of my influence, that they wished to make my acquaintance. After I had visited them many times, and had been received with great kindness, they desired to see us once all together, especially as they felt themselves indebted to the family at Sesenheim in the way of hospitality.

About this matter long deliberations took place. The mother could not easily leave her household affairs, Olivia had a dislike for the city, and Frederica no inclination towards it. The affair in this way was postponed, and at last was decided by a necessity which arose for my remaining in the city some fourteen days. We preferred to meet in the city and under some constraint, rather than not to meet at all. In this way I found my fair friends whom I was accustomed to see only in the country, who had hitherto appeared but with a background of waving boughs, rustling brooks, and nodding flowers, and the broad, free horizon,—I saw them now in city drawing-rooms, wide indeed but yet narrow,—amidst tapestries, mirrors, upright clocks, and china ornaments.

The relation to what we love is so positive, that the environment seems of little moment, but yet the mind demands that it should be the proper, natural, accustomed environment. With my lively feeling for all that were present I was confused by the contradiction of the moment. The becoming and calmly noble bearing of the mother was perfectly adapted to this circle ; she did not differ from the other ladies, but Olivia was as impatient as a fish out of water. She would lead me into the recess of a window just as she had used to call to me in the garden, or wink me one side in the fields, when she had anything special to say. Here she did it with embarrassment and clumsiness, because she felt that it was not proper, but yet did it. She had nothing to tell me but what I already knew,—the most insignificant thing in the world ; that she was horribly tired, that she wished herself on the Rhine, beyond the Rhine, yes, in Turkey. Frederica on the other hand was most remarkable in this situation. Taken by herself she did not exactly fit into the place, but this

was an evidence of her character ; instead of adapting herself to circumstances, she unconsciously moulded them according to herself. Her relation to the company and her bearing in it were the same as in the country. Every moment she knew how to enliven it. Without commotion she put all in movement, and by that very means kept society in repose, which to speak exactly is disturbed only by ennui. She thus accomplished perfectly the wish of the city aunts, who determined that they would themselves witness from their sofas our country games and amusements. Should this take place satisfactorily, the wardrobes, the ornaments, the French fashions, and all that particularly distinguished the city nieces, would no longer be the object of envious observation and wonder. In her deportment to me Frederica was unembarrassed ; she treated me as she had always done. She appeared to give me no other preference than to express her desires, her wishes, more readily to me than to any other, thus recognising me as her servant.

Upon this service one of the following days she made confident claims by communicating to me that the ladies wished to hear me read. Of my reading the daughters of the family had spoken often, for at Sesenheim I read whatever and whenever it was desired. I agreed to it at once, and only asked for quiet attention for two or three hours. To this they assented, and one evening I read the whole of Hamlet, penetrating into the sense of the piece as far as I was able, and expressing myself with vehemence and passion as is the wont of youth. I reaped a harvest of applause. From time to time Frederica had breathed deeply, and a passing flush had covered her cheeks. These symptoms of a tender heart deeply moved, with apparent outward cheerfulness and repose, were not unknown to me, and were the only reward for which I had labored. She collected the thanks which she had occasioned for me, and in her graceful manner claimed for herself the glory of having shone in me and through me.

This visit in the city had reached its appointed end, but the departure was delayed. Frederica did what lay in her power for the entertainment of the company, and I was not wanting on my part. But the rich fountains which were so abundant in

the country soon failed, and the state of things grew less and less tolerable as the elder sister by degrees became entirely wearied of it all. The two sisters were the only ladies in the circle who dressed in the German fashion. Frederica had never thought of any other costume, not conceiving that it could anywhere be out of place. She did not compare herself with the others. But Olivia could not bear to see herself distinguished by a dress such as servants wore, in a company of such aristocratic appearance. In the country she hardly noticed the city dress of others, and did not wish for it ; in the city she could not bear her own country costume. All this, added to the ready tact of the city ladies, to the hundred trifles of a sphere of life entirely opposite to her own, for some days so worked in her passionate bosom that I had to pay her the most flattering attention to soothe her, as Frederica had desired me. I feared a scene of intense excitement. I saw that the moment was at hand when she would fling herself at my feet, and implore me by all that was holy to rescue her from this situation. She was heavenly good when she could dispose herself and all around her to her mind, but such a constraint would put her at once out of humor, and at last drive her to despair. I now sought to hasten what the mother and Olivia wished, and Frederica was not opposed to. I did not refrain from praising the latter in comparison with her sister. I said to her how gladly I had found her unaltered, and even in the environment of the town as free as a bird among the branches. She was arch enough to reply that I was there, and that when I was with her she neither wished to come here nor to go there.

At last I saw them leave, and it was as if a stone fell from my heart ; for my sympathies had shared the situation of Frederica and Olivia. I was indeed not passionately tormented like the latter, but I felt myself by no means so much at ease as the former.

Since I had in fact gone to Strasburg to take my degree, the considering such a primary affair as merely collateral must be reckoned among the irregularities of my life. I had in a very easy way put aside all care as to the examination, but now I had to think of a thesis, for on leaving Frankfort I had promised my father and proposed to myself, to write one. It is the fault

of those who have the ability to accomplish a great deal, that they have all confidence in themselves. Young men must, in fact, have this, in order to accomplish anything. A comprehensive glance at legal science had tolerably provided me with materials. Particular legal subjects interested me sufficiently, and I had no doubt, since I had taken the excellent Leyser for my model, that, with my little native understanding, I should come off tolerably well. Important movements were then taking place in jurisprudence; greater moderation was demanded in judgments; all traditionary laws were daily endangered, and a great alteration seemed to await the criminal laws especially. As for myself, I was well aware that I had great deficiencies for the complete treatment of the subject which I had selected; I was without exact knowledge, and no inward tendency drove me to the matter. I was also without any impulse from without,—indeed, my companions had carried me with them to a wholly different branch of study. In general, in order to feel an interest in a subject, I had to be in some way a gainer by it—I had to perceive something in it that would be fruitful, and looked towards future advantage. Accordingly, I had noticed some materials, and had collected them. I now brought them out, reflected once again on what I should maintain, upon the plan according to which the whole must be arranged, and labored at it for some time. However, I had tact enough to perceive that, in order to discuss any particular subject, particular and persevering industry was necessary: in truth, that one could not perfectly treat such a subject without being, if not a master in the whole, at least a foreman.

The friends to whom I imparted my perplexity thought it ridiculous, because theses could be disputed on as well, or even better, than a treatise; and in Strasburg, they said, this was not uncommon. I was perfectly ready for such a way of escape, but my father, to whom I wrote on the subject, wished for a regular work, which, as he thought, I could very easily prepare, if I only had the will, and should take the necessary time. I was now compelled to cast myself on some general subject, and to choose something that I was familiar with. The history of the Church I was perhaps even better acquainted with than civil history, for

the conflict which the church—the publicly recognised divine service—has, in two directions, always been subject to, and for ever will be, had always greatly interested me. She is at the same time in strife with the State, which she wishes to raise herself, and with individuals, whom she seeks to collect into her own bosom. The State, on its side, will not admit her superiority, and individuals oppose her right of compulsion. The State aims to convert everything to public, universal ends ; the individual, to those which are domestic, and spring from his own heart and mind. From my childhood I had been a witness of such movements, when the clergy were involved in difficulties, now with the government, and now with their congregations. It was therefore firmly implanted in my youthful mind that the State, the lawgiver, ought to have the right to lay down a form of religious service according to which the clergy must teach, and to which they must adapt themselves, and the laity shape their outward and public conduct. Beyond this there should be no inquiry as to the private thoughts, feelings, and opinions of any one. By this means, I believed that all causes for collision might be removed. I chose therefore the first half of this subject for my disputation. I maintained that it was not only the right but the duty of the legislator to establish a certain form of worship to which both the clergy and the laity must conform : I treated my theme partly historically, partly argumentatively, showing that all influential religions had been introduced by generals, kings, and men in power, and that this was also the case with the Christian religion. The example of Protestantism was immediately at hand. I went to my work with the greater boldness, because I wrote it only to gratify my father, and wished and hoped nothing more earnestly than that it might not pass the censorship. I had acquired from Behrisch an unconquerable dislike to see anything of mine in print, and my intercourse with Herder had revealed to me very clearly my own insufficiency—indeed, it had brought to maturity a complete distrust of myself.

As this dissertation was almost entirely drawn from my own mind, and I spoke Latin and wrote it with ease, the time thus employed passed away very agreeably. The idea, to say the least, was not groundless : the form, rhetorically considered, was

not bad, and the whole had a tolerable completeness. As soon as I had got to the end of the essay, I went through it with a good Latin scholar, who, though he could not improve my style on the whole, corrected all the accidental faults, so that at last something was finished which could be shown. A neat copy was at once sent to my father, who was not pleased that none of the subjects before proposed had been treated, but yet was entirely satisfied with the boldness of the attempt, as was to be expected from his Protestant way of thinking. What was out of the way in it was tolerated, my industry was praised, and he promised himself a brilliant effect from the publication of this little work.

I now delivered my manuscript to the faculty, who fortunately received it with as much tact as kindness. The Dean, a lively man of some talent, began by praising it very highly, and then passed to what was doubtful in it, which by degrees he transformed into something dangerous, and thus concluded that it would not be advisable to publish it as an academic disputation. The candidate, said he, has shown himself to the faculty as a thinking young man, of whom the best is to be hoped. In order not to hinder my advancement, they would willingly allow me to dispute on theses. My treatise could hereafter be published, either as it now stood, or more completely worked out, in Latin or in another language. For me, as a private man and a Protestant, this would everywhere be easy, and I might then enjoy a more unmixed and universal approbation. I hardly concealed from the good man what a stone his words had rolled from my heart. At every new argument which he brought forward to prevent me from becoming grieved or angry at his hesitation, I grew more and more at ease, as did the good man himself when, contrary to his expectation, I made no opposition to his arguments, but admitted their force and clearness, and promised to conduct myself wholly according to his advice and guidance. I now commenced again with my repent. Theses were selected and printed, and the disputation took place, under the opposition of my table companion, with great good humor and great ease. My habit of opening at random in the *corpus juris* was of great assistance, and I passed for a well-read man. A good supper closed the ceremony according to custom.

My father was meanwhile greatly dissatisfied that the pamphlet had not been regularly printed as a disputation, because he had hoped that it would do me honor on my return to Frankfort. For that reason he wished to have it published by itself; but I represented to him that the material, which here was only sketched out, ought hereafter to be further expanded. For this purpose he carefully kept the manuscript, which, after many years, I saw among his papers.

I gained my degree on the 6th of August, 1771. The next day SCHÖPFLIN died, in his seventy-fifth year. Without any close contact he had had a deep influence upon me. Our great contemporaries are to be compared to the larger stars, towards which our eyes turn while they are above the horizon, and are strengthened and improved when they succeed in comprehending such perfections. Nature had generously given Schöpflin a prepossessing exterior, a slender form, friendly eyes, an eloquent mouth, and a presence agreeable in every way. Nor was she stinted in the intellectual gifts she bestowed on her darling; and his good fortune was without laborious effort on his part—simply the result of innate and quietly developed merits. He was one of those happy persons who are able to unite the past and present, and know how to knit the interests of life and historical knowledge together. Born in Baden, educated in Basle and Strasburg, he belonged to the heavenly valley of the Rhine as to a widespread beautiful fatherland. Directed towards historical and antiquarian pursuits, he laid a vigorous hold on them by means of a felicitous imagination, and held them fast in a most retentive memory. Zealous as he was both to learn and to teach, the course of his life and his studies kept an equal pace. He soon emerged and rose to eminence without any kind of hindrance. In the literary and civil world he easily established himself, for historical knowledge is everywhere available, and eloquence everywhere at home. He travelled through Germany, Holland, France, Italy; he came into contact with all the scholars of his time; he entertained princes, and was disliked by courtiers only when his vivid eloquence prolonged the hours of the table or the audience. On the other hand, he gained the confidence of statesmen, elaborated for them the most profound deductions, and thus found every.

where a theatre for his talents. In many places attempts were made to keep him, but he maintained his attachment to Strasburg and the French court. His immovable German integrity was appreciated even there, and he was protected against the powerful prefect, Klingling, who was secretly his enemy. Social and affable by nature, his social intercourse was as extensive as his learning and his acquaintance with affairs, and it would be difficult to understand where he could find time for it all, did we not know that a dislike of women accompanied him through his whole life. Thus he saved all those days and hours which ladies' men waste with so much happiness.

As an author he belonged to the sphere of common life, and as an orator to the masses. His programmes, his orations and addresses, were composed for particular occasions, for the commencement of some festivity; his great work, *Alsatia Illustrata*, belongs to the present, for he calls the past again into life, animates withered forms, again inspires the sculptured stone, and brings obliterated, broken inscriptions once more before the eyes and the understanding of the reader. In this manner he filled Alsatia and the vicinity with his activity; in Baden and the Palatinate he maintained till his old age an uninterrupted influence; in Mannheim he founded the Academy of Sciences, and kept his place as president till his death.

The only time I ever approached this admirable man was one night when we serenaded him by torch-light. Our torches filled the linden-shadowed court yard of the old cloister with smoke more than they lighted it. After our music was over he came down among us, and here he was perfectly at home. The slender and well formed hale old man stood with his easy, free manner, impressively before us, and made us a speech full of thought, without any trace of constraint or pedantry, uttered with fatherly affection. For the moment we thought we were something, as he treated us like kings and princes whom he was often called on publicly to address. We expressed our satisfaction pretty loudly, trumpets and drums echoed again and again, and the dearest and most hopeful academic *plebs* dispersed with inward satisfaction to their homes.

With Koch and Oberlin, his pupils and his kindred in intel-

lectual pursuits, I had already established an intimacy. My passion for antique remains was vehement. They several times showed me the museum which held, in many forms, vouchers to his great work on Alsatia. But it was not till after I had seen antiquities in their own places, that I learned the full value of this work ; that more perfectly prepared, I could, on great and little excursions, bring to mind the time when the valley of the Rhine was a Roman possession, and waking, give form and color to many a dream of the olden time.

I had no sooner made some advances in this direction, than Oberlin called my attention to the monuments of the middle age, and made me acquainted with ruins and remains, and with seals and documents of that period, and even sought to inspire in me an inclination to the so-called Minnesingers and heroic poets. To this excellent man as well as to Herr Koch, I am greatly indebted, and if all had gone according to their wishes I should have owed them the fortune of my life. The matter was as follows :

Schöpflin, who all his life had moved in the higher spheres of national law, and knew well the influence which such studies can bestow on a man of talent at courts and in cabinets, had an unconquerable and even unjust dislike of the position of a civilian, and had infused the same sentiment into his disciples. Both the above named men being friends of Salzmann, had taken notice of me in the kindest way. The passionate manner in which I seized upon outward objects, and the mode of representation by which I could bring out distinctly their best characteristics, and lend them a peculiar interest, they valued higher than I did. My narrow, I can well say beggarly, study of the civil law had not been unnoticed by them ; they knew me well enough to know how easily I could be directed ; of the attraction which I felt to an academic life I had made no secret, and they thought to gain me over to History, National Law, and Rhetoric, at first transiently and afterwards more decisively. Strasburg offered sufficient advantages. A view to the German chancery at Versailles, the previous career of Schöpflin, whose merit indeed appeared unattainable, they thought would excite me not to imitation indeed, but to emulation. By this means a mind of similar

talents might attain a development which would both be profitable to its possessor and useful to others who might wish to employ it for themselves. My patrons, and Salzmann with them, placed a high estimate upon my powers of memory and my capacity to understand readily the sense of languages, and aimed by this means to promote their own views and purposes.

How nothing came of all this, and how it happened that I returned from the French to the German side, I will here explain. As on former occasions, I may be permitted some general remarks by way of transition.

There are few biographies which can display a pure, calm, steady progress of the individual. Like the universe in which we are contained, our life is in an incomprehensible manner compounded of freedom and necessity. Our will is an announcement of what under all circumstances we shall aim to do. But these circumstances grasp us in their own way. The What lies in us, but the How seldom depends on us; we may not ask after the Wherefore, and for that reason we are justly pointed to the Because.

From my youth I had been fond of the French language. I had learned it in a more restless life, and learned a more restless life through its means. Without grammar or instruction, by social intercourse and by practice, it had become my second mother tongue. It was in order to make myself more fully master of it that I a second time chose Strasburg for my academic residence in preference to other schools. But alas, it was my fate there to experience the opposite of my hopes, and to be repelled from the language and manners rather than attracted to them.

The French, who in general make a point of good manners, are indulgent to foreigners who are beginning to speak their language; they never laugh at a blunder nor blame him directly. But, as nevertheless they cannot bear faults, they have a way of repeating what has been said with a different turn, at the same time politely strengthening the expression, and making use of the very words which ought to have been used, thus leading an intelligent and attentive person to the right and proper mode of speech.

If one really desires to improve, and has sufficient self-denial to assume the part of a pupil, much can thus be gained. It is, however, always accompanied by a certain sense of humiliation, and sometimes, from impatience, the conversation is dropped entirely when it is interrupted, and even turned in other directions without thought that the speaker is particularly interested in it. This was the case with me oftener than with others. Because I always thought I was saying something interesting, or that I was hearing something of consequence, I did not always like to have my attention called to the mere expression, an event which often happened to me, as my French was much more variegated than that of any other foreigner. I had noticed the forms of speaking as well as the accentuation of servants, valets, statesmen, young and old players, theatrical connoisseurs, peasants and heroes. This Babylonian idiom was still more confused by another strange ingredient ; I liked to hear the French reformed clergy, and frequented their churches so much the more willingly as by that means a Sunday walk to Bockenheim was not only permitted but enjoined upon me. But even this was not enough. As in my youth I had been drawn more and more to German writers of the sixteenth century, I soon included the French of that splendid epoch in my affections. Montaigne, Amyot, Rabelais, Marot, were my friends, and excited my sympathy and admiration. All these various elements moved together in my speech in a sort of chaos. In the strange expression the sense could hardly be perceived by the hearer, and even a polished Frenchman could no longer politely correct me, but only take the part of a schoolmaster, and find fault without any mollification. It here happened again as before in Leipzig, except that I could not now fall back upon the right of my native province to use its own idioms as well as any other, but on a foreign territory was compelled to yield myself to its laws.

Perhaps we might have submitted to this had not an evil genius whispered in our ears that all the endeavors of a foreigner to speak French must always be fruitless. A practised ear it was said could detect the German, the Italian, and the Englishman, under the French mask. One might be tolerated,

but never taken into the bosom of the only speech-blessed church.

But few exceptions were admitted. A certain Herr Von Grimme was mentioned, but even Schöpfung was said not to have reached the summit. They conceded that he early saw the necessity of the power of expressing himself perfectly in French; they justified his affability with persons of all classes, but especially his inclination to entertain the great and aristocratic; they also praised him for having attempted in the arena where he stood, to make the language of the country his own, and for having done the utmost to make himself a French gentleman and orator. But what did this renunciation of his mother tongue and this toil to acquire another avail him? He succeeded perfectly with no one. In society he was thought frivolous; as if any one could meet another without self-consciousness or self-conceit! For this reason these fine connoisseurs of the world and of language declared that he delivered disputations and dialogues instead of conversing. The former was set down by all as the hereditary and fundamental fault of the Germans, and the latter as the cardinal virtue of the French. Neither would they allow that he was anything as a public speaker. If he printed a finished address to the king or the princes, the Jesuits who hated him as a Protestant, started up and pointed out the faulty French of his periods.

Instead of consoling ourselves in this case and bearing as green wood what the dry was not exempt from, we only got angry at this pedantic injustice. We despaired, and were convinced by the example of Schöpfung that the attempt to satisfy the French in this respect must be vain. They were, we thought, too entirely dependent upon the external limitations of things. For this reason we took the opposite resolution of having nothing more to do with the French language, and of devoting ourselves more than before with earnestness and pertinacity to our mother tongue.

For this we were not without opportunity or sympathy. Alsatia had not been so long united to France but that among old and young there existed a loving attachment to the old order of things, manners, language, and dress. The conquered, when com-

pelled to give up one half of their existence, regard it as disgraceful to yield the other also. For this reason they cling to all that the dear past calls up, and that hope for the return of a more fortunate epoch can cherish. A large proportion of the inhabitants of Strasburg lived in small circles, which, though separate, were united in sentiment. These circles were constantly increased and recruited by the many subjects of German princes, who possessed considerable estates in the French territories, for both fathers and sons were in the habit of spending a good deal of time in Strasburg either for business or study.

German immediately became the only language heard at our table. Salzmann expressed himself in French with great fluency and elegance, but in his aims and his acts was undeniably a complete German ; Lersen might have been taken as the model of a youthful German ; Meyer of Lindau preferred lounging in good German to moving gracefully in good French ; and though among the others many were inclined to Gallic speech and manners, they yielded while they were with us to the supremacy of the general tendency.

From language we turned to political relations. Of the fundamental law of our States we found much to say in praise ; we acknowledged that it was made up purely of legal abuses, but so much the more did this show it to be superior to that of France, which was only a mass of abuses with no appearance of legality. We saw that the French government was compelled to display its energy in false directions alone, and openly, with the most gloomy anticipations, prophesied a thorough alteration of affairs.

If, on the other hand, we looked towards the north we there saw Frederic, the polar star around whom Germany, Europe, yes, the whole world, seemed to revolve. His superiority in every respect was most strikingly manifested by the introduction of the Prussian drill and even the Prussian cudgel into the French army. Besides, we forgave him his preference for a foreign language in the satisfaction we felt at the disgust occasioned him by his French poets, philosophers, and litterateurs, and their repeated declaration that he was only to be regarded and treated as an intruder.

But what most powerfully repelled us from the French was

their reiterated impolite asseveration that the Germans in general as well as their German king, with his endeavors after French customs, were altogether without taste. This affirmation, which like a refrain attached itself to every opinion, we received with quiet disregard ; but we were so much the less able to satisfy our own minds, when we were assured that Menage had said that the French writers possessed everything but taste, as also when we learned from Paris that all the most recent authors were wanting in taste, and that Voltaire himself could not entirely escape this capital accusation. From the early and repeated impulse towards nature which we had received, we would allow nothing to pass but truth and sincerity of feeling, and the direct and strong expression of it,

Friendship, Love and Brotherhood,
Do they not declare themselves ?

was the sign and watchword by which the members of our little academic horde were wont to recognise and cheer each other. These maxims were at the bottom of all our friendly meetings, at which Cousin Michel with his well known Germanism did not fail to be present.

If what has just been related shall seem to be only outward accidental appearances and personal peculiarities, it is certain that the French literature had in itself some characteristics which were calculated to repel rather than attract aspiring young men. It was old and aristocratic, and neither of these features can give pleasure to youth which on all sides looks only for freedom and the enjoyment of life.

Since the sixteenth century the career of French literature had never been entirely interrupted. Inward political and religious disturbances as well as foreign wars favored its progress, but yet it was universally maintained that a hundred years had already passed since its full bloom. By fortunate circumstances a rich harvest had at once ripened and been luckily brought in, so that the greatest talents of the eighteenth century could only modestly engage in the gleaning.

But meanwhile many things had grown old, especially comedy, which always needs to be animated anew in order with new in-

terest, though with less perfection, to represent the current life and manners. Many tragedies had disappeared from the theatre, and Voltaire did not neglect the offered and significant opportunity of publishing Corneille's works, and showing how defective was the predecessor whom, according to the universal voice, he had himself not reached.

And this very Voltaire, the wonder of his time, was now himself stricken in years, as well as was the literature which for nearly a century he had inspired and controlled. Besides him several authors were also existing and vegetating in more or less active and happy old age, who afterwards by degrees disappeared. The influence of society upon writers was continually increasing, for the best society, consisting of persons of birth, rank, and wealth, had chosen literature as one of its chief amusements, which thus became fashionable and aristocratic. Men of rank and authors mutually formed each other, and were obliged mutually to spoil each other, for everything aristocratic is naturally inclined to denial, and so French criticism also became negative, destructive, and spiteful. The higher classes employed such opinions against the writers, who, with somewhat less decency, carried on the same war among themselves, and even against their patrons. If any man were unable to impose on the public, he sought to astonish it or to win its applause by humility. Thus arose, without regard to the internal convulsions of Church and State, such a literary ferment that even Voltaire had need of his whole activity and his great superiority to rise above the current of universal disregard. He was already openly called an obstinate old child ; his labors, protracted without exhaustion, were regarded as the idle endeavor of an old age which had outlived its faculties ; the principles on which he had stood through his whole life, and to whose propagation he had devoted his days, were now neither prized nor honored ; even his God, through the confession of whom he continued to separate himself from all atheism, was no longer suffered to pass for anything. Thus was the progenitor and patriarch compelled like his most youthful competitors to mark the present moment, to endeavor after new favor, to display too much kindness to his friends and too bitter hostility to his enemies, and to act untruly and falsely, with the

appearance of a passionate striving for the truth. Was it then worth the while to have lived so great and so active a life if it must end in more entire dependence than it began? It did not escape his lofty spirit and tender sensibility that such opposition was perfectly intolerable. He frequently got air by violent exertions, gave loose reins to his humor, and freed himself from his fetters with a few keen strokes, at which his enemies were not alone in making wry faces, for all presumed to supervise him, though not one of them was his equal. A public that hears the opinion of old men only, gets wise beyond its years, and nothing is more unsatisfactory than a mature opinion when adopted by an immature mind.

To us youths, whose German love of nature and truth kept constantly before our eyes a severe honesty towards ourselves and others as the best guide in life and in learning, the partisan unfairness of Voltaire and his perversion of so many worthy objects became constantly more and more disgusting, and daily strengthened our dislike of him. He had never been able sufficiently to vilify religion and the holy books on which it is founded, to satisfy his hatred of the so-called priestcraft. This feeling had often affected me unpleasantly. But when I understood that in order to weaken the tradition of the Flood, he denied all fossil shells, and declared that they were only *lusus nature*, he lost my confidence altogether; for on the Baschberg I had seen quite plainly that I was standing on the bottom of a dried-up sea among the exuvæ of its aboriginal inhabitants. Yes, these mountains had once been covered with waves; whether before or during the flood was to me of little consequence. It was certain that the valley of the Rhine had been an immense sea, a bay which the eye could not span; that could not be talked out of me. I designed much more than ever to enlarge my knowledge of countries and mountains, whatever might come of it.

The French literature was thus old, and full of presumptuous pride both in itself and through the influence of Voltaire. Let us devote a little more time to this remarkable man!

From youth up, Voltaire's wishes and endeavors were directed to social and active life, to politics, to the acquisition of a fortune, to his relation to the lords of the earth, and to the employment of

it so that he might himself belong to their number. No one ever made himself so dependent for the sake of independence. He too succeeded in putting a yoke on the mind of the nation ; it yielded to him. In vain his opponents displayed great talents and unbounded hatred ; nothing could succeed in doing him injury. If he could not appease the court, foreign kings laid their tribute at his feet. The great Katharine, and Frederic, Gustavus of Sweden, Christian of Denmark, Poniatowsky of Poland, Henry of Prussia, Charles of Braunschweig, declared themselves his vassals, and even the Popes thought it necessary to coax him by some acts of submission. That Joseph the Second never approached him was no honor to that prince. It would not have injured him and his undertakings, if, with so fine an understanding and such broad and grand conceptions as his, he had set a higher value on intellectual power.

What I here say briefly and connectedly, sounded at that period, in a sort of confusion and perpetual discord as the rumor of the time, constantly in our ears. We heard always the praise of those who had gone before us. The good and new was in demand, but the newest was never accepted. Hardly had a patriot brought national objects of an elevating character upon the long petrified theatres, hardly had the siege of Calais won for itself enthusiastic applause, than the piece, with all its kindred, was cast away as vain and worthless. The pictures of manners by Destouches, which had given me, as a boy, so much pleasure, were pronounced weak, and the honorable name of this man was banished in disgrace. I might name many other writers, for whose sake I endured the accusation of judging like a provincial, whenever I showed any interest in them, or their works, before any one who floated on the current of the newest literature.

Thus we Germans became a source of increasing vexation to our other companions. According to our way of thinking and our natural peculiarities, we liked to keep a fast hold on the impressions of objects, to labor upon them without haste, and to leave them, if it were necessary, only at the last moment. We were convinced that by honest study and persistent endeavor some profit might be got from everything, and that by resolute energy a point could at last be attained from which both the opinion and the reason of it

could be declared. We did not, however, deny that the great and magnificent French world offered us no slight advantages and acquisitions, for Rousseau had done us a real service. But if we looked at his life and fortune, we saw that he was compelled to find the highest reward for his best labors in living unnoticed and forgotten at Paris.

When we heard the Encyclopædists spoken of, or opened a volume of their immense work, it affected us as if we ventured among the countless spindles and looms of a great manufactory. There, amid the buzzing and clacking, with the eyes and mind confused by machinery, and the manifold and incomprehensible intricacies of the whole, seeing all that goes to the making of a piece of cloth, we grow disgusted with our own coats.

Diderot was more nearly related with us, as in that all the French find fault with in him, he is a true German. But even his standpoint was too high, and his vision too wide, to make it possible for us to attach ourselves to him and take our post at his side. But yet his children of nature whom he knew how to elevate and ennoble with great rhetorical art, gave us pleasure. We were delighted with his bold robbers and smugglers, a crew that have subsequently luxuriated quite too much upon the German Parnassus. He, like Rousseau, also propagated a sentiment of disgust with the existing social life, which was the unnoticed introduction to those immense convulsions in which all that had existed seemed to disappear for ever.

But let us lay these reflections aside, to consider what influence both of these men exerted upon art. Here too they pointed and impelled us to nature.

The highest problem of every art is, by means of appearances, to produce the illusion of a loftier reality. That is, however, a false effort which, in giving reality to the appearance, goes so far as to leave in it nothing but the common every day actual.

The stage, as an ideal locality, had gained the greatest advantage by employing the laws of perspective on movable scenes. It was now proposed to throw this wantonly away, to close up the wings, and to form actual rooms, with walls in their stead. With such an arrangement of the stage, the pieces to be per-

formed, the playing of the actors, in short, the whole was to harmonize, and thus a completely new theatre be created.

The French actors had, in comedy, reached the summit of true art. Residence in Paris, observation of the externals of the court people, the relations of actors and actresses by means of love affairs with the higher ranks, all contributed to the transplanting of the elegance and propriety of social life upon the stage. With this the friends of nature could find little fault ; still they thought no small progress made when they selected serious and tragic subjects, of which even in common life there was no lack ; for their pieces made use of prose to express more elevated feeling, and thus by degrees banished their unnatural verse, together with the unnatural declamation and gesticulation.

It is highly remarkable, though not so commonly noticed, that at this time even the strong old rhythmic artistic tragedy was threatened with a revolution, which was averted only by great talent and the power of tradition.

To the actor Le Cain, who played his heroes with uncommonly good theatrical carriage, with energy, exaltation, and power, but kept himself far from all that was ordinary and natural, a man by the name of Dufresne opposed himself. This actor declared war against everything unnatural, and in his tragic playing sought only to express the highest truth. This method could not adapt itself to that of the other Parisian actors. He stood alone, they sustained each other, and he obstinately persisting, preferred to leave Paris rather than yield his opinion, and came through Strasburg. There we saw him play the parts of Augustus in Cinna, of Mithridates, and other similar characters, with the truest and most natural dignity. He was a tall and rather slender man, not of a strictly imposing appearance, but noble and pleasing. His playing was chaste and elaborate without being cold, and powerful enough where power was demanded. He was a most skilful artist, and one of the few who know how to change art into nature and nature into art. These are they whose misunderstood superiority always gives occasion to the notion of false and artificial naturalness.

Here I will mention a little work which made an important epoch ; it is Rousseau's *Pygmalion*. About this remarkable

production much could be said, for it wavers between nature and art, with the false attempt to explain and lose the latter in the former. We see an artist who, having accomplished a most perfect creation, still cannot find satisfaction in seeing his idea embodied, and in having lent it a higher life; it must be brought down to him into earthly life. He seeks to destroy the highest achievements of intellect by the act of sensuality.

All this and much beside, wise and foolish, true and half-true, that worked upon us, contributed to the confusion of our ideas; we wandered about on manifold by-ways and lanes, and thus from many sides was prepared that German literary revolution of which we were witnesses, and to which we consciously and unconsciously, willingly and unwillingly, contributed without ceasing.

For philosophic instruction and edification we felt no inclination; upon religious subjects we thought ourselves sufficiently enlightened, and thus the violent contest of French philosophy with the priesthood was to us a quite indifferent matter. Books which were forbidden and condemned to the flames had no effect on us; I recollect particularly the *Système de la Nature*, which we laid hold of with curiosity. We could not understand how such a book could be dangerous. It seemed to us so gloomy, so Cimmerian, so deathly, that we could hardly endure its presence, and shuddered before it as before an apparition. The author imagines that he attaches a peculiar recommendation to his book, when he declares, in the preface, that, as a worn out old man descending into the grave, his aim is to announce the truth to the present and future world.

We only laughed at him, for we had perceived, or imagined that we had, that old people prize nothing in the world that is good and worth loving. "Old churches have dark windows!" "How cherries and berries taste we must learn from children and sparrows!" These were our mottoes and proverbs. Thus this book appeared to us as the quintessence of dotage, insipid and absurd. All existed by necessity, and therefore, no God could be. But could there not also be a God by necessity? we asked. We confessed, indeed, that we could not escape the necessities of days and nights, of seasons of the year, of the influence of cli-

mates, of physical and animal conditions ; yet we felt something within us which appeared as complete freewill, and again something that sought to place itself in equipoise with it.

The hope of becoming ever more rational, and of making ourselves ever more independent of outward things, and even of ourselves, we could not give up. The word Freedom sounds so finely, that we would not be without it, even if it denoted an error.

None of us had read the book through, for the expectation with which we had opened it was disappointed. A System of Nature was announced, and we hoped to gain some real information about nature, our idol. Physics and chemistry, astronomy and geography, natural history and anatomy, and much beside, had now, for years, constantly pointed us to the great, glorious world. We should have found pleasure in gaining both elemental and universal knowledge of suns and stars, of planets and moons, of mountains, valleys, rivers, and seas, and all that lives and acts therein. We had no doubt that such a treatise must contain many things that the vulgar man would consider injurious, the clergy dangerous, and the state intolerable, and we hoped that this book would prove not unworthily to have been subjected to these tests. But how vacant and desolate our souls grew in this sad atheistic twilight!—in which the earth vanished with all its forms of beauty, and the heaven with all its stars. Only matter remained, moved from eternity hither and thither, right and left, with no other power, on all sides producing the endless phenomena of existence. With all this we should have been content, if from his matter in motion the author had actually built up the world before our eyes. But of nature he knew as little as we ; for, while he set up a few general ideas, he neglected her altogether. His aim was to transform that which is higher than nature, or which appears as a higher nature in nature, into a material, ponderous nature—moved, indeed, but lacking both form and direction. In so doing, he imagined that he had gained much.

If this book did us any harm, it was, that it put us out of humor with all philosophy, and especially with metaphysics. On the other hand, it cast us upon living knowledge and experience, action and creation, with so much the more life and passion.

Thus, on the frontiers of France, we were at once separate and free from everything French. Their mode of living was too contracted and aristocratic, their poetry cold, their criticism negative, their philosophy abstruse and yet unendurable, so that we were on the point of resigning ourselves to rude nature, at least experimentally. But another influence had already for a long time prepared us for higher and freer views of the world and for intellectual enjoyments, which were as true as they were poetic, and which controlled us secretly and moderately at first, but afterwards more evidently and powerfully.

I hardly need to say that here Shakspeare is meant, and after I have said this, nothing more will be necessary. Shakspeare is appreciated by the Germans more than by any other nation, perhaps more than by his own. We have profusely extended to him all the justice, fairness, and indulgence, which, among ourselves, we deny each other, and men of superior talents have employed themselves in placing his intellectual qualities in a favorable light. I have always been ready to subscribe to everything that has been said in his honor, in his praise—yes, in excuse of his faults. The influence of this extraordinary mind upon me I have before described, and attempted something concerning his works, which has not been gainsaid. This general acknowledgment will be sufficient till I am able to impart to the friends who may wish to hear me, a gleanings from the reflections upon his great excellences which I have been tempted to insert in this place.

At present I will only mention the manner in which I became acquainted with him. It took place pretty early by means of Dodd's *Beauties of Shakspeare*. Whatever may be said against such collections, which present authors in fragments, they yet produce many good effects. We are not always so calmly intellectual as to be able to receive a whole work according to its full value. Do we not seek in books for passages which have some reference to ourselves? Many, people especially who lack a comprehensive culture, are commendably excited by splendid passages; and, in this relation, I recollect one of the most beautiful epochs of my life, which marks for me the work first spoken of. Its magnificent characteristics, its grand sayings,

striking pictures, and humorous touches, all were distinctly and powerfully impressed upon me.

Now appeared Wieland's translation. It was devoured, and communicated and praised to friends and acquaintances. The Germans had the advantage of having several valuable works of foreign nations translated at first in an easy and agreeable manner. Shakspeare, in prose translation, first by Wieland, and then by Eschenburg, was rendered universally intelligible, and within the reach of every reader, and was thus adapted to produce a wide effect. I honor rhythm as well as rhyme ; by these, poetry is made poetry ; but that which is really and deeply effective, that which indeed develops and expands us, is what remains of the poet when he is turned into prose. Then remain complete the pure contents which a gleaming exterior often feigns in the absence of the reality, and often conceals when it is present. For this reason, at the commencement of youthful culture, translations in prose seem to me preferable to those in poetry. It is easy to see that boys, who turn everything into sport, please themselves with the sound of the words and the cadence of the syllables, and, in their way, wilfully parody and destroy the profound sense of the most noble work. For this reason, I suggest the inquiry, if a prose translation of Homer ought not speedily to be undertaken ? it must, however, be worthy of the present stage of German literature. I leave this, and what precedes it, to the consideration of our worthy pedagogues, whose wide experience in this matter might be most serviceable. I will only mention Luther's translation of the Bible in favor of my proposition. The rendering by this excellent man of a work composed in the most various styles, with its poetic, historical, warning, and instructing spirit, into our mother tongue, as it were by a single fusion, has advanced religion more than if he had endeavored to imitate the individual peculiarities of the originals. In vain has been the subsequent endeavor to translate the Book of Job, the Psalms, and other poems, for our enjoyment, in a poetic form. For the mass, who are to be influenced, a plain version is always the best. Those critical translations which rival the original, serve solely for the entertainment of the learned.

Thus, in our Strasburg society, worked Shakspeare ; trans-

lated and in the original, in fragments and in the whole, by verses and passages, so that as there are men who have Scripture proofs for everything, we, by degrees, adopted him in the same manner, and imitated, in our conversations, the virtues and faults of his time with which he made us acquainted. In his *quibbles* we took the greatest pleasure, and rivalled him in translations of them, and in original wanton humor of our own. To this, the surpassing enthusiasm with which I had laid hold of him contributed not a little. A glad confession that something higher hovered above me, was inspiring for my friends, who all yielded themselves to the same opinion. We did not deny the possibility of a nearer knowledge of such merits, of comprehending them, and of judging them with insight, but this we reserved for later periods. For the present, we desired only a happy sympathy and a living imitation; in so great an enjoyment we did not think of scrutinizing and finding fault, but chose much rather to give him our unlimited reverence.

If any one wishes to know what was then thought, said, and done in this circle, let him read the essay by Herder on Shakspeare, in the pamphlet on *Deutsche Art und Kunst*, and Lenz's remarks on the Theatre, to which a translation of Love's Labor Lost was added. Herder penetrates into the deepest nature of Shakspeare, and sets it admirably forth; Lenz, on the other hand, rushes like an iconoclast against the traditions of the theatre, and will not allow anything anywhere to be treated except in the Shakspearian manner. Since I have mentioned this gifted and eccentric man, I will, in this place, try to say something about him. I made his acquaintance towards the end of my residence at Strasburg. We saw each other but seldom; we did not frequent the same society, but we found occasions of meeting, and liked to converse with each other, because, as contemporaries and youths, we held similar opinions. He was small but close-built, had a most charming head, whose neat form perfectly corresponded to delicate but not sharp features, blue eyes, and light hair; in short, such a slight person as I have often met among Northern youths; a gentle and cautious gait, an agreeable but not quite fluent speech, and a manner varying between reserve and bashfulness, all especially becoming to a young man. He read little

poems, particularly his own, with great skill, and wrote a flowing hand. His way of thinking could only be characterized by the English word whimsical, which, as the dictionary shows us, combines many oddities in one idea. For this very reason, perhaps, no one was better fitted than he to appreciate and copy the flights and exuberances of Shakspeare's genius. Of this, evidence is given in the above-mentioned translation. He treats his author with great freedom, is anything but literally faithful, but he understands so well how to assume the armor, or rather the motley, of his predecessor, so humorously to mimic his gesture, that he is sure of the applause of every one who finds pleasure in such things.

The absurdities of the *clowns* were our greatest delight, and we thought Lenz a favored man when he thus succeeded in the epitaph on the deer shot by the princess.

Die schöne Princessin schoss und traf
Eines jungen Hirschleins Leben ;
Es fiel dahin in schweren Schlaf,
Und wird ein Brätlein geben.
Der Jagdhund boll ! Ein L zu Hirsch
So wird es denn ein Hirschel ;
Doch setzt ein römisch L zu Hirsch,
So macht es funfzig Hirschel.
Ich mache hundert Hirsche draus,
Schreib Hirschell mit zwrei LLen.*

The liking for the absurd which shows itself freely and without disguise in youth, but afterwards appears less and less, and yet without wholly ceasing, was in full flower among us, and we sought by original jokes to do honor to our great master. We were more than glorious, when we could lay before the club something of that sort which was thought in any degree worthy of

* The above is a version of the following, from *Love's Labor Lost* :

“ The praiseful princess pierc'd and prick'd a pretty pleasing pricket ;
Some say a sore ; but not a sore till now made sore with shooting.
The dogs did yell ! put L to sore, then sorel jumps from thicket ;
Or pricket, sore, or else sorel ; the people fall a hooting.
If sore be sore then L to sore makes fifty sores : O sore L !
Of one sore I a hundred make, by adding but one more L.”—*Translator.*

applause,—as, for example, the following on a riding-master who had come to harm upon a vicious horse.

A rider in this house doth dwell;
 He is likewise a master;
 Put both of these together well,
 We have a riding-master.
 Master of riding he for aye,
 With right the name he boasts him;
 Riding with master runs away,
 Alack! what grief that costs him.*

About these things we had serious contests, as to whether they were worthy of the clowns or not, and whether they really came pure from the fountain of folly, or had, in some improper and intolerable manner, got a mixture of sense and understanding. Such whimsicalities spread universally, so much the more irresistibly, and with the participation of a greater number, because Lessing, who possessed the greatest confidence of the public, had given the first signal for them in his *Dramaturgie*.

In a society thus excited, and with such tendencies, I found frequent occasion for a pleasant visit to upper Alsatis, whence, however, I brought back no particular instruction. The numerous little verses which we produced on every occasion, and which might form a sparkling book of travels, are all lost. In the cloister of the Abbey of Molsheim we admired the paintings of the stained windows; comical hymns to Ceres echoed in the fruitful region between Colmare and Schlettstadt; and the consumption of the many different fruits was minutely described and lauded. We also took up the weighty controversy concerning free and restricted trade in the same fruits, in a pretty gay fashion.

* We give the original of this *jeu d'esprit*.

Ein Ritter wohnt in diesem Haus;
 Ein Meister auch daneben;
 Macht man davon einen Blumenstrauss,
 So wird's einen Rittmeister geben.
 Ist er nun Meister von dem Ritt,
 Führt er mit Recht den Namen;
 Doch nimmt der Ritt den Meister mit,
 Weh' ihm und seinem Samen!

At Eisenheim we saw the immense aerolites hanging in the church, and jested, in accordance with the scepticism of the time, at the credulity of men, not foreseeing that such air-born creatures were afterwards to be preserved in our own cabinets, if not to fall on our own fields.

I still remember with pleasure an excursion on the Ottilienberg, which took place with a hundred, or rather with a thousand, true believers. Here, where the foundations of a Roman fortification were yet remaining, the beautiful daughter of a Count was said, from pious impulses, to have made her abode among the ruins and in the clefts of the rocks. Near the chapel, where wanderers edify themselves, they show a spring which is called hers, and relate many charming anecdotes. The image I formed of her, as well as her name, were deeply impressed on me. I long carried both of them about with me, till at last one of my later but not less loved daughters, who found much favor with pious and pure hearts, was fitted out with it.

On this height also, the magnificent Alsatia came before the eye, always the same, and always new. Just as in an amphitheatre wherever we take our place we see the whole crowd, but our neighbors most clearly, so is it here, with thickets, rocks, hills, forests, fields, meadows, and districts, both near and in the distance. On the horizon they pretended to show us Basle also. I will not swear that we saw it, but the distant blue of the Swiss mountains claimed even here its right over us, drawing us towards itself, and leaving behind a painful feeling as we could not obey the attraction. In such amusements and distractions I engaged the more willingly, and, to confess the truth, to intoxication, now that my relation to Frederica began to cause me serious anxiety. A youthful attachment like this, fostered by accident, is to be compared to a bomb cast in the night time. It rises in a soft, shining line, mingles with the stars, seeming to linger among them for a moment, and then describes the same line, only reversed, and brings destruction at the end of its career. Frederica remained ever the same. She appeared not to think, and not to wish to think, that the tie between us could soon end. Olivia, on the other hand, who also missed me very unwillingly, but yet was not so great a lover as her sister, had more foresight,

or more openness. She spoke often with me about my probable departure, and often endeavored to console herself and her sister upon it. A woman who gives up a man to whom she does not deny her partiality, is far from being in the painful condition in which a young man finds himself who has gone as far in his explanations towards a lady. He always plays a poor part, for from him, as one on the point of mature manhood, we expect a certain understanding of his situation. A decided brevity cannot be allowed him. The reasons of a woman who withdraws, in such a case, always appear valid, but those of a man never.

But how can a beguiling passion allow us to foresee whither it will lead ? For even when, with the clearest understanding, we have renounced it, we cannot be free from its power : we take satisfaction in the dear habit, even if it is in another way. So was it now with me. Although the presence of Frederica caused me pain, I knew nothing more delightful than when absent to think of her, and to imagine myself conversing with her. I visited her less frequently, but our correspondence grew much more active. She had the art of making the course of her daily life and her feelings real to me with cheerfulness and delicacy, and thus I called up her fine qualities before my soul, in all the favorable light of passion. Absence made me free, and my whole attachment bloomed into perfect flower through this distant intercourse. In such moments I very easily deceived myself as to the future. I was sufficiently distracted by the passing of time, and by pressing occupations. Hitherto I had made it possible to accomplish the most various things, by means of a constant living interest in the present and momentary : but towards the end, all crowded confusedly and violently together, as is always the wont when the time of leaving a place has arrived.

An accident intervened to occupy the last days of my visit. I happened to be in a pretty large party at a country-house, from which there was a magnificent view of the front of the minster and the tower that rises above it. "It is a pity," said some one, "that the whole is not finished, and that we have only one tower." I replied, "To me it seems quite as great a pity that this one tower is not completed, for the four volutes end much too

abruptly. Four light spires should be added to them, as well as a higher one in the middle, where the clumsy cross now stands."

As I made this declaration with my accustomed earnestness, a lively little man addressed me, and said, "Who told you that?" "The tower itself," I answered. "I have observed it so carefully, and have manifested so much attachment to it, that at last it determined to confess to me this open mystery." "It has not informed you untruly," he responded. "I have the best means of knowing, for I am the superintendent of the public edifices. In our archives we still have the original design, which says precisely the same, and which I can show you." On account of my near departure, I pressed for a speedy performance of this favor. He allowed me to see the invaluable parchments. I hastily copied on oiled paper, the spires which were wanting, and lamented that I had not before been instructed by this treasure. But it always happened to me, by observation and reflection, laboriously to arrive at an idea of things which perhaps would not have been so striking and fruitful to me if I had received it from others.

In such oppression and confusion I could not refrain from seeing Frederica once more. Those were painful days, whose memory has not remained with me. As I reached her my hand from horseback, tears stood in her eyes, and I was heavy at heart. Now, as I was riding along the forest-path towards Drusenheim, there came over me one of the strangest forebodings. I saw myself, not with bodily but with spiritual eyes, on horseback in the same path in a dress such as I had never worn: it was pike-grey mixed with gold. As soon as I tried to rouse myself from this dream, the form vanished. But it is strange that eight years afterwards I found myself on the same way once more to visit Frederica, and in the very costume of my dream, worn, too, not from choice, but by accident. However it may be with these things, this wonderful phantom gave me no slight consolation in those moments of separation. The pain of leaving for ever the magnificent Alsatia with all that I had acquired in it was diminished, and at last, escaped from the clamor of the

farewell, I found myself tolerably calm on a peaceful and inspiring journey.

When I arrived at Mannheim, I hastened with the greatest curiosity to visit the Hall of Antiquities, of which they boasted not a little. Already at Leipzig, on occasion of the writings of Winckelmann and Lessing, I had heard much said of these important works of art, but had seen nothing of them. Besides the Laocoon, the Father, and the Dancing Faun, there were no casts at the Academy ; and what Oeser was accustomed to say to us, with these statues as his text, was enigmatical enough. But how can an idea of the end of art be conveyed to beginners ?

Verschaffel, the director, gave me a friendly reception. One of his assistants led me into the hall, and, after he had opened it, left me to my own inclinations and observations. Here I stood, the subject of the most wonderful impressions, in a spacious quadrangular hall, whose extraordinary height almost made it a cube, well-lighted from above by windows under the cornice. The noblest statues of antiquity were not only arranged along the wall, but also placed over the whole floor—a forest of statues to be gone through—a great ideal assemblage through which one must crowd his way. All these magnificent shapes could be put into the most advantageous light by raising and dropping their curtains ; and, besides, they were movable on their pedestals, and could be turned around and changed at pleasure.

After I had for some time experienced the influence of this irresistible mass, I turned to those forms which most attracted me. Who can deny that the Apollo Belvidere, by the moderation of its colossal proportions, its slender shape, its free motion, its victorious glance, carries off the palm before all others ? Then I turned to the Laocoön, which I here saw in connexion with his sons for the first time. I represented to myself, as well as possible, what had been maintained and controverted about this group, and endeavored to gain a just view of my own, but I was carried now here, now there. The Dying Gladiator held me fast for a long time ; but to that precious though problematical relic, the group of Castor and Pollux, I was indebted for the happiest moments. I knew not before how impossible it is to

give account of a sight so full of enjoyment. I compelled myself to reflect ; and, as little as I could succeed in gaining any kind of clearness, I yet felt that every individual of this great collection was comprehensible, that each object had a natural significance of its own.

My greatest attention was nevertheless directed to the Laocoön, and I decided for myself the famous question, why does he not cry out ? by saying to myself, He cannot cry. The whole action and movement of the figures proceed, as I perceived, from the first conception of the group. The posture of the main figure, as powerful as it is skilfully managed, is wholly derived from two motives—the struggle against the snakes, and the endeavor to escape the threatened bite. To diminish the pain of this, the abdomen must be contracted, and crying aloud made impossible. So I also concluded that the younger son was not bitten, and in the same manner I sought to explain to myself the artistic peculiarities of the whole group. I wrote Oeser a letter on the subject. He did not set any special value on my exposition, but replied to my good will in words of general encouragement. But I was fortunate enough to retain firmly my idea, and to preserve it quietly for several years, till at last it combined itself with my whole experiences and convictions, in which connexion I published it in the Propylæ.

After the enthusiastic contemplation of so many sublime sculptures, I was not deprived of a foretaste of antique architecture. I found the cast of a capital of the Rotunda, and I do not deny that at the sight of those immense and elegant acanthus leaves, my faith in the Northern architecture began somewhat to waver.

The early sight of this great collection, which influenced me through my whole life, had nevertheless no immediate results. How gladly would I have commenced a book, instead of ending with this exhibition ; for hardly had the door of the splendid hall closed upon me when I wished to recover myself, and sought to banish its figures from my imagination as injurious. It was only by a long circuit that I could be brought back into this circle. Meanwhile, the silent fruitfulness of such impressions is inva-

luable, where they are enjoyed, and appropriated to ourselves without any dissipating judgments. Youth is capable of this highest happiness, if it does not attempt to be critical, but receives the influence of what is good and excellent without scrutiny or analysis.

BOOK TWELFTH.

TWELFTH BOOK.

THE wanderer had now at last arrived at home, more serene and in better condition than the first time, but yet there was a kind of exaggeration in his whole being which did not indicate perfect inward health. At the very beginning it was necessary for my mother to busy herself in regulating daily events, and bringing them into a kind of medium between my father's legal love of order and my multifarious eccentricity. At Mayence, a boy, a harp-player, had pleased me so greatly that I had invited him to Frankfort where the fair was close at hand, and promising to give him shelter and assistance. On this occasion I was impelled by a peculiarity which through my life has cost me so much ; I mean the love of seeing young people collected around me and bound to me. By this means I am always sure to come off with the burden of their fortunes. But one disagreeable experience after another has not been able to free me from this inborn passion, which even now, in spite of the clearest conviction, can at any time lead me into blunders. My mother's better understanding saw beforehand how strange it would appear to my father that such a musical vagabond should go forth from so respectable a house to earn his bread at taverns and drinking-houses. For this reason she provided for him in the neighborhood : I commended him to my friends, and in this way the child was not badly off. I saw him again some years after, when he had grown larger and more clumsy, without having improved much in his art. Of this art, my excellent mother, perfectly content with the first attempt to keep it out of the way and make all right, did not think she then had any immediate need. My father, who led a peaceful life with his long-loved hobby-horses and occupations, was in an agreeable mood, as he was

carrying out his own plans, in spite of all hindrances and postponements. I had now gained my degree, and the first step of my ascending course in civil life was taken. He was pleased with my thesis, and had engaged in a more careful examination of it, and in many preparations for its future publication. During my residence in Alsatia I had written many little poems, essays, notes of journeys, and loose manuscripts. He amused himself in fixing titles to them, arranging them, and urged me to their completion ; he was delighted with the anticipation that my hitherto unconquerable dislike to see any of my things in print would now disappear. My sister had collected around her a circle of intelligent and charming women. Without being dictatorial she was the dictator of them all, from the breadth of her understanding and her kindly disposition ; but especially because she was always more ready to play the confidante than the rival. Among my old friends and acquaintances I found Horn an unchangeable, true friend, and gay companion. With Riese I was also intimate ; he never failed to put my acuteness to the test, by opposing doubt and negation in pertinacious contradiction to a dogmatic enthusiasm into which I too easily wandered. Others, whom I shall hereafter mention, gradually added themselves to this circle, but among those who rendered my new residence in my native city pleasant and profitable, the two Schlossers stood first. The elder, Hieronymus, a profound and finished lawyer had acquired universal confidence as a counsellor. His most cherished abode was among his books and papers in his chamber, where perfect order was supreme ; there I always found him cheerful and of ready sympathies. He was agreeable and instructive in society also, for extensive reading had adorned his mind with all the beauty of the ancient world. He did not think it beneath him occasionally to add witty Latin poems to our stock of social amusements, and I yet have several sprightly couplets which he wrote under some copies I had made of strange and well known Frankfort caricatures. I often asked his advice about my career in life and business, which was then commencing, and had not a hundred-fold inclinations, passions, and dissipations hurried me out of that path, he would have been my surest guide.

His brother George, who had once more returned from Treptow, from the service of Duke Eugene of Wurtemberg, was nearer my own age. He had great knowledge of the world and great practical talent, while his acquaintance with German and foreign literature was by no means defective. He wrote as formerly, with readiness in all languages; but in this respect no longer stimulated me, as I had devoted myself exclusively to the German, and only cultivated the others so far as was necessary to read their best authors in the original. His sturdy honesty was still the same; his intercourse with the world had perhaps only made him stand more firmly, and even obstinately, upon his own well-meaning convictions.

By these two friends I was very soon made acquainted with MERK, to whom Herder had given me, from Strasburg, no unfavorable announcement. This singular man, who had the greatest influence on my life, was born in Darmstadt. Of his early education I can say but little. After the completion of his studies he accompanied a young man to Switzerland, where he remained for a time, and came back married. When I first knew him he was military paymaster at Darmstadt. Endowed by nature with wit and understanding, he had acquired a very extensive knowledge of modern literature especially, and had carried his investigations in the history of the world and the human race into all times and countries. A keen and sure judgment was natural to him. He was prized as an energetic and decided man of business, and a skilful accountant. He easily made himself everywhere at home, and was a most agreeable companion for those to whom his biting satire had not rendered him an object of fear. He was tall and slenderly formed, and was remarkable for a prominent pointed nose and light blue, or it may be, grey eyes, which gave to his quick, attentive glances something tigerish. Lavater's Physiognomy has preserved his profile. In his character there was a wonderful contradiction. By nature a frank, noble, confiding man, he had embittered himself against the world, and permitted this morbid humor to rule him so far that he felt an unconquerable inclination to be a knave, or even a villain. Wise, calm, and kindly in one moment, the next it might occur to him, as the snail

stretches forth its horns, to do something that would give pain, trouble, or even do injury to another. Yet as there is a pleasure in dealing with what is dangerous, when we believe ourselves secure from it, my inclination to live with him and enjoy his peculiarities was only so much the stronger, as a confident feeling assured me that he would not turn his bad side against myself. While by this morally restless spirit, this necessity to treat men maliciously and spitefully, he destroyed social life on the one side, another internal disquiet, which he also carefully cherished, prevented for him all inward satisfaction. He felt a kind of diletantish impulse to write,*which he indulged all the more as he expressed himself in prose and verse with ease and felicity, and could well attempt to play a part among the fine minds of the period. I still possess some poetic epistles of his of uncommon boldness and conciseness, and of a gall worthy of Swift, containing original views of persons and things of the highest merit, but written with such destructive power, that I cannot publish them at present, but must either destroy them or preserve them for posterity, as striking evidences of the secret dissensions in our literature. The fact that he always went to work in a spirit of negation and destruction was disagreeable to him, and he often declared that he envied me that innocent love of simply transcribing scenes and characters, which proceeded from delight in both the model and its image.

His literary diletantism would have been useful rather than hurtful to him, if he had not felt an irresistible impulse to attempt something in sculpture and in mercantile affairs. When he once began to be dissatisfied with his own abilities, he was beside himself, because he could not quickly enough satisfy his demand on a talent which yet needed development ; he laid aside now the plastic and now the poetic arts, and occupied himself with plans for manufacturing and commercial enterprises which were to make money while they afforded him amusement.

There was, besides, at Darmstadt a society of highly cultivated men. Privy Councillor Von Hess, who was the minister of the Landgrave, Professor Petersen, Rector Wenk, and others, were the initiated to whose estimable circle many neighbors from other cities, and many who happened to be travelling through, joined

themselves. The wife of the privy councillor and her sister, Fräulein Flachsland, were ladies of uncommon merit and talents. The latter, who was the betrothed of Herder, was doubly interesting, through her own character and her attachment to so superior a man.

How greatly this circle inspired me and carried me forward could not be told. They liked to listen to the reading of my finished works, or of those just begun; they encouraged me when I told them freely and in detail what I designed to do, and found fault when on every new occasion I laid aside what I had before commenced. Faust was already far advanced, Götz von Berlichingen was gradually forming itself in my mind, the study of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries occupied me, and the Cathedral had left behind in me a deep and serious impression which formed for these things an appropriate background.

I wrote out what I had thought and imagined upon Architecture. The first thing on which I insisted was, that it should be called German and not Gothic, and should be regarded as native and not foreign; the second, that it should not be compared with the architecture of the Greeks and Romans, because it arose from a wholly different principle. In the latter, a broken wall came spontaneously, from the fact that under a more favorable sky the roof was allowed to rest on pillars; but it is for us who must protect ourselves against the weather, to honor the genius which discovered the means of giving variety to massive walls, of apparently breaking them, and of occupying the eye in a worthy and pleasing way on the broad surface. The same holds good of the towers, which do not, like domes, imitate the heavens within, but strive towards them without, and announce far and wide to the country round, the existence of the sanctuary at their base. The interior of these sacred edifices I only ventured to touch on in poetic contemplation and in pious frames of mind.

Had I thought proper to state these views, whose worth I will not deny, clearly and distinctly in a comprehensible style, my pamphlet entitled "*German Architecture, D. M. Ervini a Steinbach,*" would have had a far greater effect when I published it, and would sooner have gained the attention of our native friends of art. But led astray by the example of Herder and

Hamann, I disguised these very simple thoughts and observations in a dusty cloud of strange words and phrases, and darkened the light that had been opened upon me both for myself and others. Nevertheless, the pamphlet was well received, and reprinted in Herder's work called *Deutsche Art und Kunst*.

At this time partly from inclination, partly for poetic and other ends, I took great pleasure in studying the antiquities of our native country, and in the endeavor to bring them vividly before my imagination. But I was also, from time to time, distracted from these objects by biblical studies, and by religious sympathies. The life and deeds of Luther especially, which shine so splendidly out of the sixteenth century, of necessity led me constantly back to the Scriptures, and to the observation of religious sentiments and opinions. It flattered my petty arrogance to regard the Bible as a work composed of fragments, formed by degrees, and from time to time elaborated into its present shape, this way of thinking being by no means predominant, or even accepted, in the circle in which I lived. As regards the general meaning I held to Luther's expression, but in particulars, I preferred Smith's literal version, and endeavored in using it to apply my little Hebrew to the best purpose. That contradictions are to be found in the Bible, no one will now deny. These, the critics sought to reconcile, by taking the meaning of the clearest passage, and endeavoring to explain those which were contradictory and less intelligible, into the same signification. I, on the other hand, tried by analysis, to discover which passage most plainly expressed the sense of the matter, and rejected all others as interpolations.

I had already, at that time, become confirmed in a fundamental opinion, without being able to say whether it had been imparted to me, or excited in me by others, or had arisen from my own reflections. It was this, that in everything that is handed down to us, especially in writing, the chief regard is to be paid to the spirit, the internal character, the sense, the end of the work. This is what is original, divine, effective, intact, indestructible, and no time, no outward influence or limitation, can work harm to this inner, primeval nature ; at least, not more than disease of the body can injure a symmetrical soul. Thus language, dialects, peculiarities, style, and, in fine, writing are to be regarded

but as the body of a spiritual work ; this body, however nearly related with the interior essence, is nevertheless subject to deterioration, to destruction. Thus then, no communication of this spiritual principle, in pure accordance with its nature, can be possible, nor, if it were possible, could it be perfectly intelligible at all periods. Such a communication must be impossible, on account of the inadequacy of the organs by which it is made, and it must be imperfectly received on account of the difference of times, of places, and above all, of human capacities and modes of thought. Thus even, expositors never agree.

For this reason it belongs to every one to seek for what is internal and essential in a book which particularly interests us, and at the same time, above all things, to consider what is its relation to what is within ourselves, and how far through its vitality our own is animated and enriched. On the other hand, everything exterior, which has no influence upon us, or is the object of any doubt, is to be given over to criticism, which, however it may succeed in dislocating and dissecting the whole, can yet never rob us of that real ground of all, to which we hold fast, nor even for a moment shake the confidence in it, which we have acquired.

This conviction, founded on both faith and sight, present and invigorating in all those events which we recognise as most weighty, lies at the base of the moral as well as literary edifice of my life, and is to be considered as a well invested and most productive capital, though in some cases we may be misled into a mistaken use of it. It was through this conception that the Bible first became really accessible to me. I had several times run through it, as is done in the religious instruction of Protestants, and by leaps, as it were, made myself acquainted with it from beginning to end and back again. The strong naturalness of the Old Testament and the delicate naivety of the New, had each attracted me ; they had never really impressed me as a whole, but the different characters of the different books now no longer occasioned me any mental confusion ; I had learned to represent to myself their significance in its true order, and had become too deeply attached to the whole book, ever to do without it. By this very attachment I was protected against all sneering scepticism,

because I saw through its dishonesty. I not only detested it, but easily fell into anger about it, and I recollect perfectly that in my childish fanaticism, I would have given Voltaire a good choking for his Saul, if I could only have got hold of him. But every sort of honest investigation gave me high satisfaction. The explanations of Eastern localities and costumes, by which a new light was cast on the Bible, were most welcome to me, and I continued to exercise all my acuteness on these valuable publications.

I have already told my readers, how I had long before attempted to initiate myself into the state of the primeval world, which is described in the first book of Moses. As I now designed to proceed by orderly steps, I took hold of the second book, after a long interruption. But what a difference ! Just as the freshness of childhood had vanished from my life, so I found the second book separated from the first, by an immense chasm. The most perfect forgetfulness of the past is expressed in these few significant words, "Now there arose a new king over Egypt which knew not Joseph." But the nation also, countless as the stars of heaven, had almost forgotten the ancestor, to whom, under the starry heaven, Jehovah made the promise which was now accomplished. I toiled with unspeakable pains, with inadequate aids and powers, through the five books, and in so doing fell upon the queerest notions. I thought I had discovered that it was not our ten commandments that were written on the tables, and that the Israelites spent not forty years but only a short period in the desert ; in the same way I imagined that I could give entirely new explanations to the character of Moses.

Even the New Testament was not safe from my investigations. My passion for dissection did not spare it, but, nevertheless, from love and from affection for it, I agreed with that consolatory saying, "The evangelists may contradict each other provided that the Gospel does not contradict itself." In this region I fancied I made discoveries of all sorts. The gift of tongues communicated at Pentecost, so openly and evidently, I interpreted in a rather abstruse fashion, which was not adapted to create for itself many disciples.

I endeavored to fix myself in one of the chief doctrines of

the Lutheran creed, to which the Moravians have even given a keener edge, that, namely, which regards evil as predominant in man; but in this my luck was nowise remarkable. Yet I had tolerably appropriated the technology of this doctrine, which I made use of in a letter that I addressed under the mask of a country parson, to a new brother in that office. The leading theme of this letter was the tendency of that time; this was said to be tolerance, which I declared to be prevailing among the better class of minds.

These things, which were produced by degrees, I printed at my own cost the following year, in order to make a trial of the public, gave them away, or put them into Eichenberg's bookstore, in order to sell them off as well as possible without making any profit on them myself. Here and there a review took notice of them, now favorably, now unfavorably; yet they disappeared at once. My father preserved them carefully in his cabinet, or else I should be without a copy. I shall add them, as well as some things of the same kind that I have found, and which have not yet been printed, to the new edition of my works.

Since it was Hamann who caused the sybilline style of these compositions as well as their publication, this seems a proper place to speak of this estimable and influential man, at that time as great a mystery to us as he has continued to be to Germany in general. His Socratic Memorabilia excited notice, and was liked by those persons especially who could not be at peace with the deceitful spirit of the times: He was felt to be a deep-thinking and substantial man, who, with a complete knowledge of the outer world and of literature, yet had faith in something mysterious and incomprehensible, and uttered this faith in a manner altogether his own. By those who then ruled the literature of the day he was regarded as an abstruse enthusiast, but youth with its aspirations yielded to his attraction. To him the "Still in the Land," as, half in jest, half in earnest, those pious souls were called, who, without being members of any society, formed an invisible church, turned their eyes, and to my friend Fräulein Von Klettenberg, not less than to her friend Moser, the appearance of this Magus of the North was most welcome. When it was understood that he maintained the same beautiful

and lofty philosophy in the embarrassments of the most contracted domestic circumstances, it only added a new zeal to their friendship for him. To President Von Moser, with his wide influence, it would have been an easy thing to provide a tolerably comfortable existence for a man of such frugal habits. The affair was opened, and the parties went so far in their mutual understanding, that Hamann undertook the long journey from Königsberg to Darmstadt. But as the President was accidentally absent, the eccentric Hamann turned about, from what cause nobody knows, and went home again, though they still preserved a friendly relation by means of letters. I have in my possession two letters of the Königsberg philosopher to his patron, which testify to the wonderful greatness and sincerity of soul of their author.

But so good an understanding was not to be of long duration. These pious people had thought him pious after their own way,—had received him as the Magus of the North, and had no notion that he could appear except with the most reserved demeanor. But he had already given them a shock in "The Clouds," a collection of Socratic Memorabilia. He now published the "Crusade of a Philologist;" not only was the goat's profile of a horned Pan to be seen on the title page, but on one of the first leaves was a woodcut of an immense cock beating time for some young cockerels that stood before him, holding notes in their claws on which were satirically written certain pieces of church music, that were not to the taste of the author. This laughable display caused no slight displeasure among the more sensitive of his friends, which when communicated to him did not edify him, but only prevented a more intimate union between them. Nevertheless Herder, who kept up his correspondence with his bride and ourselves, kept our attention towards him alive, and communicated to us all the products of his remarkable mind. Among these were his reviews and notices in the Königsberg Gazette, all of which had the most singular character. I have a nearly complete collection of his writings, and a very important manuscript treatise on Herder's prize essay upon the "Origin of Language," in which, in the most peculiar way, he flings strong flashes of light on this specimen of Herder's genius.

I have not given up the hope of either editing an edition of Hamann's works myself, or of at least contributing to it. When these valuable papers are once more brought under the eye of the public, it will be a fit occasion to treat more intimately of the nature and genius of their author. But meanwhile I will bring forward a few words concerning him, especially as many superior men are still living with whom he was also a favorite, and whose agreement with what I have to say, or correction of it, will be welcome to me. The principle to which all of Hamann's expressions can be reduced is this. "All that man undertakes to perform, whether by deed or word, or otherwise, must come from all his powers united; everything individual, dismembered, is worthless." A splendid maxim! but hard to follow. In life and in art it may be applied, but in every communication by speech that is not poetic, there is great difficulty in it, for words must sunder and individualize themselves in order to say, to signify anything. The man who speaks, must, for the moment, become one-sided. There is no communication, no instruction without separation of one thing from others. But as Hamann constantly opposed this separation, and as he felt, imagined and thought in unity, and sought to speak in the same manner, and demanded the same from others, he came into conflict with his own style and with all that others produced. In order to accomplish the impossible, he reached after all elements; the deepest and most mystical contemplations in which Nature and the Soul have hidden meetings, lightning-like flashes of understanding, that shine forth from such a contact, significant images that hover in these regions, profound aphorisms of sacred and profane writers, and all forms of humor that could be added to these peculiarities, formed together the wondrous whole of his style, of his utterances. If the reader is unable to bear him company in his depths, to wander with him upon his heights, to seize upon the forms which float along before him, to find out the exact meaning of passages in an infinitely extended literature which are only alluded to, the study of him will only be an increase of dimness and darkness. This obscurity will continue to grow greater with years, because his allusions were chiefly directed to peculiarities in life and literature which have only a momentary predominance. In my col-

lection there are several printed sheets on whose margins the passages to which his hints relate are cited in his own hand. On opening them we find an ambiguous, double light, which seems most agreeable: we must, however, throughout, give up all that is commonly called understanding. Such works deserve to be called Sybilline leaves, for the reason that they cannot be considered in and for themselves, but some occasion of seeking their oracles must be waited for. Every time we open them we seem to find something new, because the sense of each passage touches and affects us in a manifold manner.

I never saw him personally, or had any immediate relation with him through letters. He appears to me to have been transparent in all the relations of life and friendship, and to have had a very correct perception of the ties of men to each other and to himself. All his letters that I have seen, were excellent, and much plainer than his writings, because in the latter the reference to time and circumstances as well as to personal relations was never distinctly manifest. I thought, nevertheless, that I could discover in every letter the most naive sense of the superiority of his own intellectual gifts; he always seems to have thought himself somewhat wiser and more knowing than his correspondents, whom he met ironically rather than heartily. If this were true only in individual cases, they were yet the majority. This was the reason that I never desired any intimate intercourse with him.

Between Herder and us, on the other hand, a friendly traffic was carried on with activity, only it was a pity that he could never keep himself quiet and undisturbed. But he never relaxed his bantering and scolding; Merk, too, needed little to irritate him, and then he always succeeded in vexing me also. As of all writers and all men, Herder had the greatest respect for Swift among ourselves, we always called him the Dean, and this also gave occasion for many misunderstandings and vexations.

Despite all this, it gave us the highest pleasure to know that he was to be installed at Bückeburg, which to him was a double honor, for his new patron had gained the highest reputation as a man of insight and bravery, as well as of eccentricity. In the same post Thomas Abt had become famous; a man whom all

Germany lamented, at the same time that all felt a satisfaction in the monument his patron had raised over his grave. Now, from Herder, in the place of his predecessor, was expected the fulfilment of all the hopes which that too early lost scholar and divine had so justly excited.

The epoch at which this took place, gave double distinction and value to such an appointment. Several German princes had already imitated the example of Count Von der Lippe, by taking into their service not only men of learning and capacity for affairs, but also those of intellect and promise. It was said that Klopstock had been called by the Margrave, Charles of Baden, not for a definite employment in business, but by his presence to grace and benefit the most elevated class of society. On account of this step, increasing attention was drawn to this excellent prince, who bestowed his care on everything useful and beautiful, and respect for Klopstock was at the same time not a little increased. Everything that he published was loved and cherished; his odes and elegies we copied with care, so that they might be accessible to each one of us. We were for this reason highly delighted when the Landgravine, Caroline of Hesse Darmstadt, caused a collection of them to be printed, and one of the copies fell into our hands, enabling us to complete the collection we had written out with our own hands. In this way the original readings long remained our favorites, and we have often found new life and joy in poems which the author afterwards rejected. So true it is the life which flows forth from a beautiful soul has all the freer influence the less it seems to have been artistically elaborated by the aid of criticism.

By his character and conduct, Klopstock had succeeded in creating attention and respect for himself and other men of talent, and now they became indebted to him for the security and improvement, as far as possible, of their private condition. In former times, the book trade dealt mainly in important scientific, professional works, in standard books which had been published at the expense of their authors, and had become moderately profitable. But poetic writings were regarded as something holy, and it was held almost as bad as simony to receive a compensation for them, or to enhance it. Authors and publishers

stood in the strongest mutual relation. Both appeared, according to the point of view, as patrons and as clients. The authors who were generally regarded and revered by the public, not only for their talent, but as men of the highest moral character, had an intellectual rank, and felt themselves compensated by the pleasure of their labors. The latter were content with the second place, in which they found a considerable profit; but their wealth placed them again above the poor poet, and thus all stood in the finest equilibrium. Magnanimity and gratitude were not rare on both sides; Breitkopf and Gottsched lived together all their lives; stinginess and meanness, especially of the piratical order, were not yet in vogue.

Notwithstanding these facts, a universal movement now took place among German authors. They compared their own moderate, if not miserable, condition with the riches of the leading booksellers. They saw the great fame of a Gellert, of a Rabener, and in what constrained circumstances, a German writer, though universally beloved, must live without other means of making life easy. Even inferior and narrow minds felt a lively desire to see their situation improved, and to make themselves independent of publishers.

At this time Klopstock came forward and offered his "Learned Republic" for subscriptions. Although the latter cantos of the Messiah could not have the effect of the earlier, partly on account of their contents, partly on account of their mode of treating the subject, which came pure and innocent into a pure and innocent time, the esteem for the poet remained unchanged. By the publication of his Odes, he had drawn to himself the hearts, minds and souls of many persons. Many friendly men, among them several of great influence, offered to secure payment beforehand. This was set at a *louis d'or* a copy, in order, as it was said, not only to pay for the book, but to take this opportunity of rewarding the author for his services to his country. People came up in crowds for this purpose; even youths and maidens, who had little to spare, opened their boxes of savings. Men and women, the upper and middle classes, contributed to this sacred benefaction, and there were perhaps a thousand subscribers who paid in

advance. Expectation was raised to the utmost, and the confidence of the public could not have been greater.

After this, on the appearance of the work, it was destined to have the strangest results in the world; it was of great and permanent value, but yet by no means universally interesting. Klopstock's opinions on poetry and literature set forth in the form of an ancient German druidical republic, and his maxims concerning the genuine and the false expressed with laconic pith, in which much that was instructive was sacrificed to the fantastic form. For writers and literary men, the book was and is invaluable; but for this circle alone could it have use or influence. He that had thought for himself followed the thinker, he that had sought and prized the real was instructed by the profound and honest author, but the amateur, the reader was not enlightened; for him the book remained a sealed one. Yet it had been put into all hands, and when every one was expecting a work perfectly useful for all, the majority obtained one from which they could gain no profit whatever. The astonishment was universal, but the esteem for the author was so great that no complaint, and hardly a gentle murmur followed. The youthful and beautiful part of the world got over the loss, and gave away jestingly the dear-bought copies. I myself received several from fair friends; of them, however, not one is remaining.

This enterprise, successful to the author, but a failure to the public, had the unfortunate consequence that subscriptions and payment before-hand could no longer be thought of, but yet the wish had spread too widely for a renewal of the attempt to be omitted. The publishing house of Dessau offered to undertake it by the wholesale. Here both writers and publishers were, by an intimate association, to enjoy in common the advantages of this method. The necessity, so long and so painfully felt, now excited great confidence in the scheme, which, however, could not long maintain itself. After brief endeavors, the partners separated, both sides having suffered loss by the connexion.

Among the friends of literature a kind of rapid medium had already got established. The *Musen Almanachs* bound together all youthful poets, while the journals united them with other writers. My passion for creation was boundless. Towards what I had

created I was indifferent: only as in social circles I repeated it for myself and others did my attachment return. Many persons were interested in my larger and smaller works, because I compelled every one who was conscious of only a moderate inclination and talent for writing, to produce, in his own manner, something independent; while I was, in return, incited by all to new compositions. This mutual urging and chasing, carried even to extravagance, had a happy effect on each according to his nature. Out of such driving and working, such living and letting live, such taking and giving, which, without any theoretic guiding-star, was carried on with free hearts and without special motives by so many young men, according to the innate character of each, arose a famous, praised and abused literary epoch. In this a mass of young and genial men broke out in all the grace and all the arrogance that is proper to the season of youth; and the use of their powers produced many a joy and no little good, while their abuse of them occasioned much vexation and evil. The actions and reactions which came from this source are the main subject of this book.

But in what can young persons find the highest interest, how can they excite interest among their equals in age, if they are not inspired by love, and if affairs of the heart, of some sort, are not living realities for them? I had in silence to lament a lost love: this made me gentle and yielding, and more agreeable in society than in those brighter times when nothing reminded me of a want or of an error, and I rushed forward without restraint.

Frederica's answer to a written farewell rent my very heart. It was the same hand, the same turn of thought, the same tone of feeling which had formed itself by me and for me. I now for the first time understood the loss she suffered, and saw no possibility of supplying it or of soothing its pain. She was wholly present before me. I was continually conscious that she was wanting to me; and, what was the worst, I could not forgive myself for my own unhappiness. Gretchen had been taken from me, Annette had deserted me, but now, for the first time, I was myself in fault. I had wounded the loveliest heart in its depths, and thus the period of a gloomy remorse, and of the want of an in-

spring love to which I had grown accustomed, was most painful—yes, intolerable. But man desires to live, and so I took a sincere interest in others—I sought to disentangle their embarrassments, and to unite all those who were in danger of being separated, so that it might not go with them as it had with me. I thus came to be called the confidant, and also the wanderer, on account of my roaming about the country. The locality of Frankfort was favorable to the composure of mind which I could gain only under the free sky, in valleys, on hills, in fields, and woods. The city lay in the middle between Darmstadt and Homburg, two delightful places, which were on good terms through the relationship of both courts. I accustomed myself to live afoot, and to wander about as a messenger between hill and plain. I went alone or in company through my native city, as if it were nothing to me, dined in one of the great hotels in the thoroughfare, and went on my way after dinner. I was more than ever directed to the open world and to free nature. On the way I sang to myself wild hymns and dithyrambics, one of which yet remains, under the title of the Wanderer's Storm-Song. I sang with passion this half-crazy piece, when once I had to make my way through a terrific storm that met me on the road.

My heart was untouched and unoccupied. I conscientiously avoided all near relations with women, and thus I knew not that a loving genius secretly hovered around me. While I was ignorant and inattentive, a tender and lovely woman cherished in silence an affection for me. I did not perceive it, and for that very reason was only more cheerful and agreeable in her beneficent society. It was not till many years after, not till after her death, that I discovered her secret heavenly love, and in a way that overwhelmed me. I was innocent, and could purely and sincerely lament an innocent creature, and the more truly as the discovery took place in an epoch when I had the fortune to be living for myself and my intellectual tendencies wholly without passion.

But now, while pain at the condition of Frederica distracted me, I sought help again from poetry, after my old way. I once more commenced my poetic confessions, in order, by self-inflicted penance, to become worthy of an inward absolution. The two

Marias in Götz Von Berlichingen and Clavigo, and the two sorry figures, their lovers, may perhaps have been the results of such remorseful reflections.

But as in youth we quickly overcome the effects of diseases and injuries, because a healthy system of organic life can rise up for a sick one, and give it time to recover, so physical exercise on many favorable occasions, came to my aid, and I was in several ways excited to take new courage and to find new joys and enjoyments in life. By degrees, riding on horseback took the place of my loitering and aimless wanderings on foot. By this means I could more quickly, more comfortably, and with more pleasure reach my end. My youthful companions once more introduced fencing ; but, on the setting in of winter, especially, a new world opened before us. I determined at once to try skating, which I had never learned. In a short time, by practice, reflection, and perseverance, I had got as far as is necessary to enjoy a gay and lively hour on the ice, without attempting to distinguish myself.

This new and happy mode of activity we also owed to Klopstock and to his enthusiasm for its spirited movement, which I learned from private accounts, and from his odes, which give undeniable evidence of it. I remember perfectly, on one bright frosty morning, repeating these lines as I sprang out of bed :

Already, with the sense of health all joyous,
Far down along the shore my swift skates have whitened
The glittering crystal

How, in the winter, the dawning day enlightens
Softly the sea ; where, like stars, the frost all-sparkling,
Night all over it has strewn !

My timid and hesitating determination was at once fixed, and I flew straight to a place where so old a beginner might properly make his first trial. And, in truth, this employment of physical energy well deserves to be praised by Klopstock. It brings us in contact with the freshest childhood, excites the youth to the enjoyment of all his suppleness, and can even keep off a stagnant old age. Our love for this pleasure was without bounds. We were not satisfied with spending the whole of a splendid Sunday

on the ice, but kept up our sport till late in the night. While other exertions exhaust the body, this lends it an ever new power of motion. The full moon rising above the broad, nightly meadows, frozen into fields of ice, the night-wind whistling about our path, the deep thunder of the ice sinking with the fall of the water, the mysterious echo of our own motions brought Ossianic scenes vividly before us. Now this, and now that friend, uttered an ode of Klopstock, in declamatory recitative, and when in the twilight we found ourselves once more together, the unfeigned praise of the author of our joys sounded aloud.

And shall that man not be immortal,
Who health and joys for us discovered,
Such as the horse swift in the race ne'er gave us ;
Such as even the flying ball has not ?

Such gratitude the man deserves who knows how, by spiritual impulse, to ennoble and worthily extend the practice of any kind of human activity !

Just as gifted children whose intellectual faculties have had a remarkably precocious development, when they have the chance, return to the simplest childish plays, we forgot, all too easily, our vocation to more serious matters. Still this often solitary amusement, this easy waving, as it were, into unbounded space, woke for me very many inward necessities which had been long asleep. To such hours I am indebted for the more rapid completion of some earlier undertakings.

The more obscure centuries of German history had always engaged my curiosity and imagination. The thought of dramatizing Götz von Berlichingen, as he was in his own period, was a favorite one with me. I read the chief writers of that time with industry. On the work *De Pace publica* I bestowed my whole attention. I had carefully studied it through, and as far as possible got a clear view of the strange peculiarities it displays. These labors directed towards moral and political ends, I could also make use of in another way ; and as far as history went, I was well prepared for the visit I was now about to make to Wetzlar : for the Imperial Chamber had arisen in consequence of the public tranquillity, and its history was well adapted to be

a clew through the confusion of German events. The constitution of the judiciary and the armies of a kingdom, gives the most perfect insight into that of the kingdom itself. Even the finances, whose influence is thought so great, are of much less importance; for, when deficiencies in the treasury occur, it is only necessary to take from the individual what he has laboriously got together and preserved, and thus the state is always rich enough.

What I met with in Wetzlar is of no great significance, but it may, perhaps, have a higher interest if the reader will not refuse a brief history of the Imperial Chamber, by which he will bring before his mind the unfavorable moment in which I arrived there.

The lords of the earth are made so, for the most part, by assembling around them those men who are most wise and just in peace, as well as those who are bravest and most determined in war. To the capital of a German Emperor, a court like this was a necessary appendage; it always accompanied him, also, on his journeys throughout his dominions. But neither the cares of such a body, nor the Swabian law which obtained in the south of Germany, as well as the Saxon law in the north; neither the judges appointed for the maintenance of these laws, nor the decisions of the peers of contending parties; neither umpires appointed by agreement, nor friendly settlements brought about by the clergy; in short, nothing whatever could put at rest the inflamed spirit of chivalrous feuds, which among the Germans had been nourished into a habit by internal hostilities and foreign wars, but especially by the crusades, and even by judicial usages. These turmoils were irksome to the emperor, as well as to the more powerful classes. In them, men of little importance were injurious to each other, and when they became united, even to the more powerful. Thus, all external power, as well as internal order, was palsied; and besides all this, a greater part of Germany was still burdened with the courts of the *Vehme*, of whose horrors we may form an idea by thinking that it had degenerated into a secret police, which finally came to be exercised by merely private persons.

The attempt in any degree to escape these evils was in vain, till at last the Estates urgently proposed a court formed from

among themselves. This plan, however well meant, inclined altogether to an extension of their privileges, and a limitation of the imperial power. Under Frederic the Third, the matter was delayed, but his son Maximilian yielded from outward pressure. He was to appoint the chief judge, and the Estates the assistants. Of these there were to be twenty-four, but at the beginning twelve were thought sufficient.

A fault which men are universally guilty of in their undertakings, was the first and permanent fundamental defect of the Imperial Chamber; inadequate means were employed for a great end. The number of its members was too small; how could they solve this difficult and far-reaching problem? But who could urge the establishment of a sufficient body? The emperor could not favor an institution which seemed to work against him more than for him; much greater reason had he to complete the formation of his own court, his own council. If we regard, on the other hand, the interest of the Estates, all that they sought was the stoppage of blood. Whether the wounds were healed was to them of less consequence, and, besides, here was a new source of expense! It may not have been clearly perceived that by this institution the retinue of every prince must be increased, to a decided purpose indeed, but who likes to pay money for what is necessary? Every one would be content if he could get all useful things "for God's sake."

At the beginning the members of the court had to be supported by its fees; afterwards a moderate grant was made by the Estates; both were miserable. But willing, judicious, and industrious men were found to meet the great and pressing need, and the court was instituted. Whether it was seen that by this an amelioration but not a cure of the evil could be looked for, or whether, as is usual in such cases, the founders flattered themselves with the hope of doing much with small resources, cannot here be determined; enough that the court was expected to serve as a means for punishing the disturbers of the peace, more than a preventive of the evil. But it had hardly come together when it acquired power of itself. It feels the height on which it stands, and apprehends its own political importance. Accordingly it endeavors by a striking activity to acquire for

itself a more decided respect. All matters that can be gone through with at once that belong to the present moment, or otherwise can easily be decided, are despatched immediately, and thus throughout the empire it seems effective and of worth. Affairs of a more weighty nature, on the other hand, regular law suits, were delayed, but this was no misfortune. The state is only concerned to render possession certain and secure ; whether property is held rightfully is to it of less consequence. For this reason no harm came to the empire from the immense and gradually increasing number of delayed processes. Against open violence care was taken, and those who used it were quickly dealt with : others who went to law for the possession of property, lived, enjoyed, or starved, as they could ; they died, they were ruined, or they settled their difficulties ; all that was the profit and loss of individual families, but the empire was by degrees quieted. The Chamber was legally endowed with arbitrary power, with a kind of club-law against the disobedient, and, had the right of excommunication been put into its hands, that right would have been made more effective.

But soon on account of the varying number of side-judges, of the frequent interruptions, and of the removal of the court from one place to another, its records of undecided cases and other papers necessarily increased to an infinite quantity. In the distress of war a part were carried from Speyer to Asschaffenburg, another part to Worms, and the third fell into the hands of the French, who thought they had got hold of the archives of the State, but would afterwards gladly have been rid of such a desert of documents, if any one had been willing to furnish carts for the purpose.

On occasion of the negotiations for the peace of Westphalia, the keen-sighted men who were assembled perceived clearly what a lever was required to move this load of Sisyphus from its place. Fifty side-judges were now to be appointed, though this number was never actually reached. The half of it was again made to answer, because the expense appeared too great, but had the parties concerned seen their whole interest in the matter, all might have been afforded. About a hundred thousand guilders were necessary to maintain fifty assistant judges, and Germany

might easily have provided double that amount. The proposition to endow the Chamber with the confiscated estates of the Church could not be carried through, for how could the two religious parties agree in this sacrifice? The Catholics were not willing to suffer yet greater losses, and the Protestants wished to employ what they had gained for more private ends. The division of the kingdom into these two parties had here also, in many regards, the worst influence. Then the interest of the Estates in this their own court constantly diminished; the more powerful sought to free themselves from the confederation; licenses which released their holders from liability to be arraigned before any superior court of justice were more and more sought for; the higher ranks kept back their payments, and the lower, who, besides, thought themselves wronged in the estimates, delayed as long as they could.

It was thus exceedingly difficult to raise the sum necessary for the salaries. Hence arose a new occupation, a new pastime for the Chamber, a function which had heretofore been cared for by the so called yearly visitations. Princes in person, or their councils, resorted for weeks or months to the place of the court, investigated the cases, inquired into undecided suits, and undertook to bring them to a conclusion. At the same time, when there occurred any stoppage in the course of the law, or of the court, or when any mal-practice threatened to find its way into the proceedings, they were authorized to remedy the difficulty. Errors of the court they were to discover and remove, but the investigating and punishing of the personal offences of the members did not become a part of their duty till some time after. But inasmuch as the parties to lawsuits always desired to put off the last gasp of their hopes for yet a moment longer, and for that purpose appealed to the higher authorities, these visitations became a court of revision, before which, at first, a new trial might be had in definite and plain cases, but where, at last, in all cases, postponement and perpetuation of the controversy were sought for. To this result the right of appeal to the Imperial Diet, and the struggle of both religious parties to maintain an equal influence, where supremacy was impossible, alike contributed.

On reflecting what this court might have been without such hindrances, without such disturbing and destructive conditions, we find it impossible to conceive the consideration and weight it could have attained. Had it had at the beginning a sufficient number of judges, and had they been assured an adequate support, with the judicious energy of Germans, the influence it would have possessed is immeasurable. They would then actually have deserved the title of Amphictyons, which was bestowed on them rhetorically ; they could, indeed, have raised themselves into a third power, revered alike by the supreme head and by the members of the state.

But, instead of doing such great things, the court languished wretchedly along, except for a short time under Charles the Fifth, and before the thirty years' war. It is difficult to understand how men could be found for so thankless and profitless an employment. But men, when they have a knack for their daily occupations, take a pleasure in them, even if they cannot clearly see what will come of them. Germans, especially, have such an obstinate disposition, and thus for three hundred years the most estimable men busied themselves with these labors and objects. A characteristic gallery of such figures would, even now, excite sympathy and inspire courage.

It is in just such anarchical periods that the man of ability and character steps forth most firmly, and he that seeks the public good finds himself exactly in his proper place. Thus, for example, the directorship of Fürstenberg has always been remembered with admiration and reverence, and with the death of this excellent man begins the epoch of many pernicious abuses.

But all these later and earlier evils sprang from the original source, the too small number of persons. It was the rule that the side-judges should give their judgments in a fixed succession, and according to a regular order. Every one knew when the turn would come to him, and in which of the suits he would have to decide ; he could thus study out the whole subject, and prepare himself beforehand. But as the unfortunate postponed cases grew more and more numerous, it became necessary to select the more important legal questions, and decide them out of their order. The decision as to which affair is the more weighty

In a crowd of important cases is difficult, and the selection gives room for partiality; but now another more doubtful fact intervened. The referendary wearied both himself and the court with some difficult and complicated matter, and then, after all, there was nobody to pay the expense of the verdict. The parties were reconciled, had divided the property in dispute, were dead, or had changed their minds. For this reason it was determined only to bring forward such causes as were urged by those engaged. Some assurance of the continued perseverance of the parties was thought necessary. By this means an introduction was given to the greatest abuses, for he that recommends his own interest must recommend it to some one, and to whom better than to him in whose hands it is. It was impossible, in the nature of the case, to keep such a thing secret; for, when subalterns knew it, how could it remain concealed? If expedition be asked for, favor may doubtless be asked also, for the very fact that a man prosecutes his cause shows that he considers it just. He will not attempt directly to influence the judges, or, at least, he will first attempt the subordinates. These must be won over, and thus a channel is opened for all intrigues and corruptions.

Emperor Joseph, from his own impulse, and from the example of Frederic, turned his attention first to the army and to public justice. He fixed his eyes on the imperial chamber; traditional forms of injustice, established abuses had not remained unknown to him. Here, also, something must be set on foot, carried forward, accomplished. Without asking whether it would be for the imperial advantage, without foreseeing the possibility of a fortunate result, he proposed a visitation, and hastened its opening. For a hundred and sixty-six years no regular visitation had taken place; an immense chaos of documents had accumulated and was increasing yearly, for the seventeen judges were by no means able to accomplish the current business. The number of undecided processes was twenty thousand; only sixty could be concluded yearly, while double that number of new ones was commenced. For the visitation, also, no trifling number of Revisions were waiting: they were said indeed to be fifty thousand. Moreover, many different kinds of abuses hindered the course of jus-

tice, the most dangerous of which were the personal offences of individual judges.

When I was about to visit Wetzlar the visitation had already been some years in progress, the guilty judges suspended from office, and the investigation was far advanced. As the skilful masters of German national law could not let this opportunity pass without setting forth their views, and dedicating them to the common good, many profound and elaborate works had appeared, from which any one who was possessed of a slight preliminary knowledge, could gain complete information on the subject. On going back to the constitution of the empire, and the works treating of it, it was astonishing how attractive to the learned was the monstrous condition of this thoroughly diseased body, which was only kept in life by a miracle. Our respectable German industry, which busies itself more with the collection and evolution of individual facts than with their results, found here an inexhaustible motive for every new occupation. Now the empire and the emperor were to be put on opposite sides, the lesser states were to be opposed to the greater, the Catholic to the Protestant, and there was never any want of opinions varying with these different interests, or of occasions for new strife and controversy.

As I had, as far as practicable, made myself familiar with all these ancient and modern circumstances, I could not promise myself any great satisfaction from a residence at Wetzlar. The prospect was by no means charming of finding in a small and ill built, though well situated city, a double world ; the domestic, old, traditional one, and a foreign, new one, commissioned to criticise the former most severely ; a judging and a judged court ; many a citizen in fear and anxiety lest he should be involved in the impending investigation ; respectable persons whom all had been wont to look up to, convicted of the most shameful misdeeds, and condemned to disgraceful punishment. All this together afforded the saddest spectacle. There was no attraction to lead one more profoundly into a business which was complicated in itself, and now appeared so utterly confused by crimes.

I knew well beforehand, that besides the German civil and national law, I should meet with nothing of scientific interest, and that I should be deprived of all poetic companionship. Still,

after some delay, the desire for change, rather than any thirst for knowledge, carried me into this region. But how was I astonished, when instead of a morose kind of society, I was met by a third academic life. At an extensive *table d'hôte* I found a company of gay young people, almost all subordinates and attachés to the commission. They received me in a friendly way, and on the very first day, it was no secret to me, that they infused spirit into their noonday meeting by a romantic fiction. This consisted in representing, with wit and vivacity, a table of knights. At the head sat the Grand master, at his side the chancellor, and then in regular succession, the more important officials. Then followed the knights in order of priority. Strangers who visited them, had to be content with the lowest places, and for them, the conversation was mostly unintelligible, because the language of the company had got enriched with many allusions besides the regular expressions of chivalry. A knightly name was bestowed on each one, with an epithet. Me they called Götz von Berlichingen, the Honest. The former I earned, by my attention to our sturdy German forefathers, the latter, by my sincere attachment and submission to the excellent men whom I learned to know. To the Count von Kielmannsegg, I was greatly indebted during the whole of my stay. He was the most earnest of all, highly gifted, and to be depended on. Von Gouë, a man difficult to understand and describe, a stout, broad, Hanoverian figure, still and reserved, was not without talent of many kinds. About him, the suspicion was entertained that he was a natural son. He loved a kind of mysterious behavior, and hid his most cherished wishes and plans under manifold eccentricities. He was the very soul of this strange band of knights, though he had not wished for the place of Grand master. Thus, as just at that time, this head of the chivalry went away, he preferred to have another chosen to the office through whom he exercised his influence. He had the art of managing trifling accidents, so that they seemed of importance enough to be carried through with formalities borrowed from old fables. In all this no earnest purpose could be seen; his end was solely to appease the tedium which himself and his colleagues could not avoid, in so protracted an affair, and to fill up the

vacant space, were it only with cobwebs. This fabulous trifling was carried on with the greatest external seriousness, no one presuming to find it laughable when a certain mill was treated as a castle, and the miller as its lord, or when the "Four Children of Haimon" was declared a canonical book, and extracts from it read with reverence on occasions of ceremony. The dubbing of knights was performed with traditional symbols, borrowed from several orders. One great source of fun was had in treating as a mystery what everybody knew; an affair was carried on publicly, and yet no one was permitted to speak of it. The catalogue of the whole table was printed with as much formality as the calendar of a diet of the Empire. When families presumed to mock at the affair, and to declare it absurd and ridiculous, intrigues were put in play to punish them, and some sober husband, or near relative, was persuaded to join the society and be dubbed a knight. This gave the opportunity for a splendid, malicious delight, at the vexation of his relations.

Another strange philosophical and mystical order, which had no name of its own, was contained in our knighthood. The first degree was called the Transition, the second, the Transition of the Transition, the third, the Transition's Transition to the Transition, and the fourth, the Transition's Transition to the Transition's Transition. The explanation of the high sense of these degrees was the duty of the initiated, and was performed according to the rules of a printed little book, in which these whimsical words were explained, or rather amplified, in a yet more whimsical manner. These things afforded the most agreeable pastime. The folly of Behrish, and the perversity of Lenz, seemed here to be combined; only I repeat, that behind these veils no trace of any purpose was to be found.

I had a great taste for such drolleries, and was the first to bring the selections, from the "Four Children of Haimon," into use. I arranged how they should be read at feasts and solemnities, and could myself read them with great emphasis, but, nevertheless, I had had enough of such things before. For this reason, in the want of my Frankfort and Darmstadt circles, it was delightful to me to make the acquaintance of Gotter, who attached himself to me with sincere regard, and to whom I returned a

heartly good will. His mind was delicate, clear, and sunny, his talents practised and under subordination. He endeavored after the French elegance, and was fond of that part of English literature which is devoted to moral and agreeable objects. We spent many happy hours together, in which we mutually communicated our studies, plans, and inclinations. He excited me to many little works, especially as being connected with Göttingen, he wanted some of my poems for Boie's Almanach.

By this means I came into an intimacy with those young and gifted men who kept themselves together, and afterwards in so many ways accomplished so much. The two Counts Stolberg, Bürger, Voss, Hölty, and others, were, in faith and intellect, collected around Klopstock, whose influence extended to all sides. In such an ever extending circle of German poets, together with manifold poetic merits, there was developed another impulse to which I can give no name that would be entirely appropriate. It might be called the need of independence, a desire which always arises in time of peace, and always where there is no peculiar sign of its opposite. In war we bear with rude violence as well as we can, feeling that physically and economically we are injured, but not morally. Constraint, then, disgraces no one, and time-service is not shameful; we grow wonted to suffer from foes and friends; we have wishes but no intentions. But in peace men's love of freedom appears more and more, and the freer we are the freer we desire to be. We will submit to nothing, we will not be confined in any narrow limits, nor shall any one else; and this tender and even morbid feeling appears in noble souls in the form of justice. This idea and sentiment at that time was universal, and as there were but few who were oppressed, it was determined that they should be freed from even this accidental oppression. There arose a kind of moral warfare, a mixture of individuals in the government, which, with laudable motives, led to extensive and unhappy results.

Voltaire had excited great attention, and gained great respect for himself by the protection which he bestowed on the Calas family. For Germany, the attempt of Lavater against the sheriff (*Landvogt*) had been even more striking and important. The aesthetic disposition united with youthful spirit, strove forwards,

and as, just before men had studied for the sake of obtaining places, they now began to act as supervisors of public officers ; the time was near when theatrical and romantic poets delighted to find their villains amongst ministers and official characters. Hence arose a half imaginary, half real world of action and reaction, in which we afterwards went through the most vehement era of informations and excitements, which the writers of magazines and journals permitted themselves, with a sort of rage, under the mask of justice. These persons went so much the more irresistibly to their work, as they made the public believe itself to be the true tribunal,—a foolish belief, as no public has an executive power, and in incoherent Germany public opinion can neither benefit nor injure any one.

Amongst us young people there was indeed nothing so deserving of blame to be found. A certain analogous notion, composed alike of poetry, morality, and a noble aspiration, had taken possession of us, harmless indeed, but yet fruitless.

By Hermann's Victory, and the imputation of it to Joseph the Second, Klopstock had produced a remarkable movement. The Germans freeing themselves from the yoke of the Romans, were splendidly and powerfully set forth in a picture, perfectly adapted to awaken the self-consciousness of the nation. But as in peace, patriotism consists solely in every one's sweeping before his own door, minding his own business, and learning his own lessons to the end that his house may be in good order, the passion which Klopstock excited found no object on which it could be expended. Frederic had saved the honor of a part of the Germans against a combined world, and it was permitted to every member of the nation by applause and reverence of this great prince to take part in his victory ; but what could be done with that newly-raised, warlike self-confidence ? What direction should it take, and what effect produce ? At first it was merely a poetic form, and the songs of the bards, afterwards so often decried and set down as ridiculous, grew more numerous through this impulse and incitement. There were no foreign enemies to contend with, and so tyrants were imagined, which characters, at first in general, and afterwards by degrees in particular, were attributed to princes and their servants. Thus poetry united

itself to that administration of justice which is condemned above, and it is remarkable to see poems of that time written wholly in one tone, which would have everything of a superior order, whether monarchical or aristocratic, removed.

As for myself, I continued to make poetry the expression of my feelings and fancies. Little poems, like the *Wanderer*, belong to this period. They were published in the *Göttingen Musenalmanach*. In Götz von Berlichingen I shortly afterwards sought to rid myself of every particle which had got into me of the mania I have spoken of. I represented how in times of disorder the brave and right-thinking man in all cases resolves to take the place, and exercise the power of the law, but falls into despair when his conduct is regarded as equivocal or even rebellious by the higher authority, which he recognises and reveres.

Klopstock's odes had not only introduced the northern mythology into German poetry, but much more the nomenclature of its divinities, and although I gladly made use of everything else that was offered me, I could not bring myself to employ this, for the following reasons. I had long before learned the fables of the Edda out of the preface to Mallet's Danish History, and had stored them in my memory. They were among those stories which I liked best to relate when asked to do so by a party. Herder put Resen into my hands, and made me better acquainted with the heroic sagas. But however highly I esteemed all these things, I could not bring them into the circle of my poetic resources. Splendidly as they excited my imagination, they yet withdrew entirely from the sensible perceptions, while the mythology of the Greeks, embodied by the greatest artists of the world in visible forms easy to recall to the mind, yet existed in a mass before our eyes. I did not, in general, make any great use of the gods, because they had their abode out of nature, which I had learned to copy. And what in the world could have induced me to put Woden in place of Jupiter, Thor in place of Mars, and instead of the distinct southern figures, to introduce into my poems images of mist, or rather mere empty echoes? On the one side they were related to the Ossianic heroes, as formless as themselves, only they were ruder and more gigantic; on the

other, they appeared as in the bright and genial fairy tales. The humorous tone which runs through the whole northern mythus, was to me very pleasing and remarkable. It appeared to me the only one which throughout jokes with itself; adventurous giants, magicians, and monsters, opposed to a strange dynasty of gods, and occupied solely in misleading and deriding the highest persons as long as they are in power, and in threatening them besides with disgraceful and inevitable destruction.

A similar if not equal interest had been excited in me by the Indian fables which I first met with in Dapper's Travels, and at once added with great satisfaction to my stock of stories. I succeeded particularly with the Altar of Ram as a narrative, though the Ape Hannemann, in spite of the great variety of persons that it contains, remained the favorite of my public. But these unformed and overformed monsters could not satisfy me in a strict poetic sense; they were too remote from that reality towards which my mind continually strove.

But against all these goblins and their hostility to art, my sense of the beautiful was under the protection of superior power. That is always a fortunate epoch in literature when great works of the past once more come into notice, and take a place in the order of the day, because then they produce a perfectly new effect. Thus the Homeric light once more rose upon us anew and that exactly in the spirit of the time, which in the highest degree favored such an appearance; for at last the constant reference to nature caused the works of the ancients to be regarded from that side. What many travellers had done for the explanation of the Scriptures, others did for Homer. Guys began it, Wood carried it forward. A Göttingen review of the original work, which was at first rare, made us acquainted with its purpose, and taught us how far that purpose was accomplished. We no longer saw in Homer a strained and inflated world of heroes, but the mirrored truth of a primeval present, with which we sought as far as possible to make ourselves familiar. We could not, indeed, fully agree with the notion that in order to attain a complete understanding of the Homeric poems, we must make ourselves acquainted with the savages of the new world, and their customs as travellers describe them, for it cannot be

denied that both Europeans and Asiatics are represented in the Homeric poems as having already reached a high degree of culture—a higher, perhaps, than the period of the Trojan war could have enjoyed. But as this notion agreed with the prevailing confession of nature, we allowed it in so far to hold good.

With all these occupations, which were related to anthropology, in a higher sense, as well as most nearly and dearly to poetry, I had every day to be conscious that I was staying in Wetzlar. The conversation respecting the present business of the visitation and its constantly increasing difficulties, the discovery of new offences, never ceased for an hour. Here once more the holy Roman empire was assembled, not for external festivities and pomp, but for a matter that went to the very bottom of things. But even here was recalled to my mind that half-empty dining-hall on the coronation day, where the invited guests remained outside because they were too proud. Here they came indeed, but even worse symptoms could be perceived. The lack of unity in the whole, and the contrary efforts of the parts, were continually appearing, and it was no secret that princes had confidentially suggested to each other this idea, "We must see if on this occasion something cannot be gained from the sovereign."

Every sincere person will appreciate the evil impression which the petty detail of all the anecdotes of neglects and delays, injustices and corruptions, must have made on a young man who desired the good, and cultivated his own mind in accordance. Whence, in such a condition of things, can arise any reverence for the law or for the judge? But had the greatest confidence been placed in the results of the visitation, and could it have been possible to believe that it would fully accomplish its high end, still no advantage could be found for a happy, advancing youth. The formalities of the visitation in themselves amounted solely to a prolongation of the proceedings. Whoever desired to do anything, and to be of importance, must serve the party in the wrong, always take the side of the accused, and be very skillful in pugilistic tricks, in the art of giving and of warding off blows.

Since, in this disposition, I could not succeed in æsthetic labors, I lost myself again and again in æsthetic speculations, as all

theorizing points to a defect or cessation of the productive powers. I had earlier made the attempt with Merk, which I now repeated with Gotter, to discover maxims which should guide in artistic creation. But neither they nor I could succeed. Merk was a sceptic and eclectic, and Gotter held fast to those examples which were most to his taste. Sulzer's theory was published more for the amateur than for the artist. In this sphere moral effects are demanded above all, and hence arises at once a dissension between the class which produces and that which makes use of the works produced. A good work of art can and certainly will have moral results, but to require moral aims of an artist is to destroy his profession.

What the ancients said on this important subject, I had for some years read piecemeal, if not regularly studied. Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, Longinus,—not one was overlooked,—but I gained nothing from them ; for all these writers presupposed an experience of which I was destitute. They led me into an infinitely rich world of art, they set forth the merits of excellent poets and orators, whose names are for the most part all that remains of them, and convinced me only too completely that a great mass of objects must lie around us before we can reflect or act ; that we must ourselves accomplish something—yes, that we must fail, in order to know our own powers and those of others. My acquaintance with so much that was excellent in those ancient times was still only the knowledge of schools and books, without life, while it is a striking fact that the most famous orators especially formed themselves altogether in life, and that it is impossible ever to speak of their peculiarities as artists without at the same time dwelling on their personal peculiarities. With poets this seemed less to be the case : but everywhere life was the only point where nature and art came in contact ; and thus the result of all my observation and reflection was the old resolution to study into both internal and external nature, and in loving imitation everywhere to give up the rule to her.

With these workings, which rested in me neither day nor night, two great or rather immense masses of material lay before me, whose wealth I needed to prize only in a slight degree in order to produce something of value. These were the more ancient epoch

in which falls the life of Götz von Berlichingen, and the modern, whose unhappy bloom is depicted in Werther.

I have already spoken of the historical preparation to the first work ; the ethical impulses to the second shall now be explained.

The resolution to preserve my inner nature according to its peculiarities, and to allow outer nature to influence me according to its qualities, led me to the strange state in which Werther was designed and written. I sought to free myself inwardly from everything foreign ; to regard what was without with love, and to permit all creatures from men down, as far as they could be comprehended, to work upon me, each in its own way. Thus arose a wonderful affinity with the individual objects of nature, and an intimate accord, a harmony with the whole ; so that every change of places and of regions, of the times of the day or the year, or whatever else might happen, affected me most inwardly. The glance of the painter added itself to that of the poet ; the beautiful rustic landscape, enlivened by the river, increased my inclination to solitude, and favored the silent contemplations which extended themselves forth on all sides.

But since I had left the family circle at Sesenheim, and the society of my friends at Frankfort, a vacuum had remained in my bosom which I was wholly unable to fill. Thus I found myself in the state in which our inclinations, provided they only appear in some degree disguised, unexpectedly get the mastery, and make all good plans vain.

And now that the author has arrived at this stage of his undertaking, his heart for the first time is light at the labor ; henceforward this book will be what it should be. It has not announced itself as independent ; much more it is designed to fill up the gaps of an author's life, to complete many fragments, and to preserve the memory of many lost and forgotten adventures. But what is already done, neither ought to be, nor can be repeated. In vain would the poet appeal to the darkened powers of his soul ; in vain demand of them, once more, to represent those cherished relations which gave so high a beauty to his abode in Lahnthal. Fortunately the genius had earlier cared for that, and impelled him, while youth yet had the power to hold fast that which had just gone by, to depict it, and boldly enough, at

a lucky hour to give it to the public. That here Werther is meant, can need no more distinct declaration. Of the persons therein introduced, as well as of the intellectual tendencies it describes, there will be something to reveal hereafter.

Among the young men attached to the commission, who were preparing themselves for their future career, was one whom we were accustomed to call, simply, the Bridegroom. He was remarkable for a calm, equable deportment, clearness of views and definiteness in speech and action. His genial activity, his persevering industry, so far recommended him to his superiors, that he was promised a speedy appointment. Upon this he felt justified in betrothing himself to a lady who fully harmonized with his way of thinking and his wishes. After the death of her mother, she had displayed a high degree of activity as the head of a numerous young family, and alone, had sustained her father in his widowhood. Her future husband could thus hope an equal blessing for himself and his descendants, and expect a decided domestic happiness. Every one confessed, and without any personal view to that end, that she was a woman to be wished for. She was one of those, who, if they do not inspire vehement passion, are formed to excite a universal pleasure. A lightly formed, symmetrical figure ; a pure, healthy nature, and the glad activity of life which thence arises ; an unembarrassed care for daily necessities ; with all these she was endowed. The observation of these qualities was always agreeable to me, and I always sought the society of such as possessed them ; and if I could not always find opportunity of doing them actual service, I shared with them more willingly than with others, the enjoyment of those innocent pleasures which are always at the hand of youth, and can be appropriated without great pains or expense. And as it is further established, that women only adorn themselves for each other, and are, when together, weariless in inventing new means of ornament, those were my favorites, who in simple neatness give to the friend or the lover, the silent assurance that it is done for him only, and that with little trouble and cost a whole life could go on in the same manner.

Such persons are not too much occupied with themselves. They have time to observe the world without them ; and tran-

quillity enough to adapt themselves to it, to assimilate themselves with it. They become prudent and intelligent without exertion, and need for their culture but few books. Such was the Bride. The Bridegroom, with his thoroughly upright and confiding disposition, soon made every one whom he prized acquainted with her ; and was pleased, while he himself devoted the greater part of the day zealously to his duties, when his betrothed, after the completion of her domestic labors, found recreation in the society of others, and engaged with friends of both sexes in walks and rustic parties. Lotte—for so we will call her—was without pretension, in a double sense ; because her nature was more inclined to universal kindness than to special attachments, and because she had destined herself for a man who was worthy of her, and would at that moment gladly have united his fate to hers for life. The most cheerful atmosphere surrounded her. Yes, if it is a pleasing sight to see parents bestowing an uninterrupted care on their children, there is nothing more beautiful than to see brothers and sisters doing for brothers and sisters the same service. In the former we seem to see the impulse of nature and ordinary usage, but in the latter there is more of choice and free affection.

The new comer, perfectly free from all ties, and without care in the presence of a maiden, who, already betrothed, could not consider the most polite attentions as acts of courtship, and thus could receive them with so much the more pleasure, let all go quietly on, but was soon involved and engaged, and at the same time treated with such friendship and confidence by the young pair, that he no longer knew himself. Indolent and dreamy, because nothing satisfied him, he found what he himself had not in the fair friend, who, while she lived for the whole year, seemed to live only for the moment. She liked to have him as her attendant, and soon he could not do without being near her ; for she was to him the medium of the ordinary world. Soon, in the oversight of an extended farm, they became inseparable companions in the fields and meadows, in the ploughed lands and garden. The Bridegroom was with them when his occupations permitted ; they had all three become accustomed to each other without wishing it, and knew not how it came that they could not

be without each other. So they lived through the splendid summer, a genuine German idyll to which the fruitful earth gave the prose, and a pure friendship the poetry. Wandering through ripe corn-fields, they were refreshed on dewy mornings; the song of the lark, the whistle of the quail, were delicious sounds; hot hours followed, terrific storms broke over the country; but they only drew nearer each other, and many a little vexation in the family was easily effaced by enduring love. Thus one ordinary day followed another, and yet all seemed festival days; the whole calendar should have been printed in red. He will understand me, who recollects what is said of the happy unhappy friend of Rousseau's Heloise; "And sitting at the feet of his beloved, he will break hemp and will wish to break hemp, to-day, to-morrow, and next day; yes, for his whole life."

I can say here but little, though, perhaps, as much as may be necessary, of a young man whose name afterwards was mentioned only too often. It was Jerusalem, the son of the free and delicately minded divine. He also was attached to a commission. His form was pleasing, of medium size, and symmetrical; his face more round than long, his features soft and calm, with whatever else is proper to a handsome young man of light complexion; his eyes blue and attractive, rather than full of meaning. His dress was in the English fashion of the Low Germans; blue coat, drab vest and breeches, and boots with brown tops. I never visited him, nor he me, but I often met him among my friends. The expressions of the young man were moderate, but friendly. He took an interest in the most dissimilar productions. Especially he was fond of those drawings and sketches in which the quiet character of lonely landscapes was caught and represented. On such occasions he brought forward the engravings of Gessner, and urged amateurs to study after them. In all our comedy of Knighthood and its ceremonies he took little or no interest, but lived for himself and his own thoughts. A decided passion for the wife of a friend was spoken of, though they were never seen publicly together. In general, but little was said of him, except that he occupied himself with the English literature. As the son of a wealthy man, he was not obliged to engage in his employment with anxiety, nor to toil for speedy appointment to a place.

The engravings by Gessner which I have spoken of increased our pleasure and interest in rustie objects, and a little poem which we received with passion into our narrow sphere allowed us henceforward to care for nothing else. The *Deserted Village* of Goldsmith must greatly impress every one in that stage of culture, and in that circle of ideas. In it, all which we have loved to behold, which has been dear to us, which we have prized, and sought for passionately in our vicinity in order that we might take a glad, youthful interest in it, is depicted not as living or active, but as a past, vanished existence. Festivals and holidays in the country, church consecrations and fairs, the grave assembly of the elders under the village lindens crowded away by the keen love of the youths for the dance,—and the friendly sympathy of the higher classes. How fitting seemed all these amusements moderated by an upright clergyman, who knew well how to quiet and remove all that could give occasion to quarrels and dissension. Here we found again our honest Wakefield, in his well known sphere, not as he lived and moved, but as a shade evoked by the low, lamenting tone of the elegiac poet. The very thought of this description appears most felicitous as soon as we comprehend the design, which is, with pleasing sadness, to recall an innocent past. And how has the Englishman in every sense succeeded in this agreeable design! I shared my enthusiasm for this most charming poem with Gotter, who had better luck than I in the translation we both undertook. I had much too anxiously endeavored to imitate, in our language, the delicate significance of the original, and thus, while I was fortunate in individual passages, I was not so with the whole.

If, as they say, the highest happiness consists in longing, and if true longing can only be directed towards the unattainable, everything was combined to make the youth whom we are now accompanying in his wanderings the happiest of mortals. An attachment to a betrothed bride, the endeavor to gain and appropriate to our own literature the master-pieces of foreign languages, the effort to copy natural objects not only with words, but also with pencil and graver, though without precise technical skill; every one of these was sufficient to expand the heart and fill the bosom. But the sufferer was removed from these sweetly

painful circumstances, and by new relations brought into new unrest through the following events.

HÖPFNER was then living at Giessen as professor of Law. He was as skilful a teacher as he was a penetrating thinker, and an upright man, qualities for which Merk and Schlosser prized him very highly. I had already for a long time wished for his acquaintance, and now as both these friends were thinking of making him a visit for the purpose of discussing some literary subjects, it was agreed that I should take this opportunity and go to Giessen at the same time. But, as it usually happens in the wantonness of gay and peaceful times, we did not like to do anything in a straightforward way, but like true children sought to get some sort of sport out of everything, so it was determined that I should appear as a stranger, and again satisfy my passion for disguise. Accordingly, one brilliant morning, before sunrise, I started from Wetzlar up the valley along the Lahn: such walks had once again become my greatest delight. During them I planned new works, put them together, completed them, and in the stillness of nature was happy and content with myself, as I set right again all that the eternal contradictions of the world had heaped upon me inopportunely and confusedly. When I arrived at the end of my journey, I found out Höpfner's house, and knocked at the door of his study. He cried, "Walk in!" and I appeared modestly before him as a student going home from the universities, who, on the way, wished to make the acquaintance of the most distinguished men. I was prepared for his inquiries as to what more nearly concerned myself; I related a plausible prosaic fable, with which he seemed satisfied, and giving myself out as a jurist, all passed off well, for I knew his great merit in this profession, and was also aware that he was just then devoting himself to natural law. Yet the conversation halted occasionally, and he appeared to be looking at a book of genealogies, or else for my departure. But yet I succeeded in lingering, waiting with certainty for Schlosser, with whose punctuality I was well acquainted. He came, was welcomed by his friend, glanced at me sideways, but took little notice of me. But Höpfner drew me into the conversation, and showed himself to be a thoroughly kindly and humane man.

At last I took my leave and hastened to the tavern, where I exchanged a few rapid words with Merk, and decided on what was to follow.

The two friends had agreed to invite Höpfner to dinner, as well as Philip Henry Smith, who played a part in German literature, though certainly a very subordinate one. The whole affair was laid on his shoulders, and he was to be punished in an amusing manner for many sins that he had committed. When the party was assembled in the dining hall, I sent by the butler to know if the gentlemen would permit me to dine with them. Schlosser, to whose face a kind of severity was particularly becoming, opposed it, because they did not wish to have their friendly conversation disturbed by another person. But, as the butler urged it, and on the intercession of Höpfner, who assured them that I was an endurable man, I was admitted, and at the beginning of the dinner conducted myself gravely and bashfully. Schlosser and Merk were under no constraint, and expressed themselves on many things with as much freedom as if no stranger had been present. The most important literary matters, as well as men of the highest reputation, came into discussion. I now showed myself rather more boldly, and was not embarrassed when Schlosser occasionally found fault with me in earnest, and Merk in jest. I turned upon Smith all my arrows, hitting sharply and certainly his weak points, which were well known to me.

I had confined myself to a frugal pint of ordinary wine, but the gentlemen ordered better, and did not fail to set it before me also. After many current events were gone through with, the conversation fell upon general subjects, and we talked on the question, which will always be repeated as long as there are authors, namely, Whether literature was ascending or descending, going forwards or backwards? This question, on which old and young, those who are coming on the stage, and those who are leaving it, seldom agree, we discussed pleasantly without any special intention of arriving at a conclusion. At last I began, and said: "Literature, as it seems to me, has seasons, which, succeeding each other as in nature, produce certain phenomena, that regularly return. For that reason I do not believe that we

can wholly praise or blame any epoch in our literature ; especially I do not like to see certain kinds of talent which are developed by the time cried up so high, while others are censured and set down as valueless. The voice of the nightingale is called forth by the Spring, but so is that of the cuckoo. The butterflies that charm, and the gnats that vex us, are alike produced by the warmth of the sun. Were this taken to heart we should not hear the same complaints renewed every ten years, nor would the vain endeavor to extirpate this and that which does not please us so often be wasted." The company looked at me with astonishment. Whence could I have such wisdom and such tolerance ? But I went calmly on, comparing literary phenomena with the products of nature, and chanced to fall, I know not how, upon molluscs, from which I drew some striking illustrations. "These," said I, "are creatures to which we cannot deny the possession of a sort of bodies ; but as they have no bones, it is impossible to make anything of them ; they are nothing better than living slime, but yet the sea must have such inhabitants." As I was carrying the figure beyond the limits of decorum in order to describe Smith, who was present, and all this class of characterless literary men, they said to me that a comparison run too far became worthless. "Well, then," I replied, "I will return to the earth, and take the ivy. As molluscs have no bones, so this has no trunk, but yet likes to play the chief part wheresoever it fixes itself. It belongs to old walls, which have nothing to destroy, but from new buildings it ought to be removed. It sucks the juice out of trees, but to me it is most intolerable when it climbs upon a post and declares that it is a living trunk, because its own leaves are spread about it."

Although they again found fault with my illustrations, as obscure and inapplicable, I grew more and more vehement against all parasitic creatures ; and as far as my knowledge of Natural History then went, I carried it through pretty successfully. Finally I sang a *Vivat* for all who were men on their own account, a *Perseus* for all intruders, seized Höpfner's hand as we rose from the table, shook it warmly, declared that he was the best man in the world, and at last, embraced him and the others

right heartily. My brave new friend thought he was dreaming, till at last Schlosser and Merk let out the riddle. The discovery of the joke created a gaiety for us all, in which Smith also joined. We appeased him by the acknowledgment of his actual merits, and by our sympathy with some of his favorite pursuits.

This felicitous introduction could not do otherwise than enliven and promote the literary congress, which was the special purpose of our meeting. Merk, whose activity was now literary, now æsthetic, and now mercantile, had stirred up our sound-headed and learned Schlosser, whose treasures of knowledge extended into so many branches, to edit for this year the Frankfort *Gelehrte Anzeigen*. They had associated with themselves Höpfner and other academicians in Giessen, a school teacher of reputation in Darmstadt, namely, the Rector Wenk, besides several other men of mark. Each had sufficient historical and theoretical knowledge in his own department, and the spirit of the time caused them to work with unanimity. The two first volumes of this journal (for it afterwards fell into other hands) give striking evidence how clear was the insight, how comprehensive the view, and how sincere the purpose of the collaborators. The widest human, cosmopolitan interests are supported; men of talent and just reputation are defended from all attacks; their part is taken against their enemies, especially against pupils who abuse what they have been taught, to the injury of their teachers. Perhaps what is most interesting, is the reviews of other journals such as the *Berliner Bibliothek*, the *Deutscher Mercur*; the various talent displayed in these articles, their penetration, as well as their impartiality, are justly admired.

As for myself, I saw plainly that I wanted all the qualifications of a regular reviewer. My historical knowledge was not coherent; the history of the world, of the sciences, of literature, had engaged me only by epochs, while I had studied special subjects only partially and in masses. The possibility of reviving things for myself, even out of their connexion, led me into the way of becoming perfectly at home with the history of a century, or with a division of a science, without learning anything of what went before or what followed after. Thus a certain theoretical-practical sense was developed in me, which enabled me

to give account of things, rather as they should be, than as they were, in a sort of leaping fashion, without proper philosophic connexion. To this contributed a power of easy comprehension, and a friendly reception of the opinions of others, provided that they did not come into direct contradiction with my own.

This literary union was also kept up by a lively correspondence, and in the near neighborhood of the places, by frequent personal interviews. Whoever first read a book, reviewed it, and often there were two who treated the same book; the matter was talked over, kindred things were put together, and when a result was obtained, some one undertook the arrangement. Thus many reviews are as powerful as they are spirited, and as agreeable as they are satisfactory. The part of spokesman often fell to me; my friends gave me leave to jest occasionally in their articles, and also to appear myself, when any subjects to which I felt myself equal, lay especially on my heart. I should in vain attempt to recall the peculiar tone and character of those days, either to describe them, or to reflect on them, if the two volumes of the Journal did not furnish me the clearest documents. Selections from passages in which I recognise my own hand, may, with similar things, appear hereafter in their proper place.

In so active an exchange of knowledge, opinions, convictions, I very soon learned to know Höpfner intimately, and liked him greatly. As soon as we were alone I spoke with him on the subject of his own profession, which was also to be mine. He gave me a very naturally connected and instructive elucidation. I was then not clearly aware that I could learn from books and conversation, but not from continuous professional lectures. A book permitted me to linger on a passage, to look backwards, which oral explanation and a teacher could not do. Often at the beginning of a lecture I seized upon a thought which I kept to, but thus lost what followed, and fell entirely out of the train of ideas which were being set forth. Thus it had also gone with me in the law colleges, for which reason I could easily find subjects of conversation with Höpfner, who readily entered into my doubt and hesitation, and supplied many deficiencies for me, so that the wish arose in me to stay with him in Giessen, for the sake of his instructions, without removing myself too far from

my friends at Wetzlar. Against this wish of mine my two friends labored at first without design, but afterwards knowingly; for both were not only hastening to get away themselves, but both had also an interest in getting me from that region.

Schlösser discovered to me that he had come into a relation at first friendly, and then more intimate, with my sister, and that he was looking round for a speedy appointment in order to unite himself with her. This revelation surprised me somewhat, although I might before have found it in my sister's letters. But we easily pass that by without notice which might offend the good opinion that we have of ourselves, and I now first perceived that I was actually jealous of my sister; a sentiment I concealed from myself the less, because since my return from Strasburg our relations had become much more intimate. How much time we had consumed in communicating to each other the little affairs of the heart, the love, and other matters which had happened during my absence! And had not a new world opened for me in the domain of the imagination, into which I must introduce her also? My own little performances and a wide expanded, world-poetry, were also by degrees to be made known to her. Thus I made to her impromptu translations of such passages of Homer as would be most sure to seize upon her interest. I read into German Clarkson's literal version, as well as it would go. My reading usually assumed metrical turns and endings, and the vividness with which I had apprehended the figures, and the power with which I expressed them, removed all the impediments of an awkward arrangement of the words: what I uttered with the soul she followed with it. In this way we entertained ourselves many hours of the day; when she had company, the wolf Fenris and the ape Hannemann were unanimously called out. How often have I been obliged to repeat, without abridgment, the famous history how Thor and his companions were turned into apes by the gigantic magicians! Thus so pleasant an impression has remained from all these fables that they still are the most agreeable objects which my fancy can recall. I had drawn my sister, also, into my Darmstadt circle, and thus my wanderings and removals only served to confirm the tie between us. I spoke to her of everything that occurred; communicated to her at once

by letter, every little poem, even if it were only an ejaculation ; and let her see all the letters I received, and the answers I made to them. All this kindly activity had been checked since my departure from Frankfort. My abode at Wetzlar was not fruitful enough for such intercourse, and besides, my attachment to Lotte might have interfered with my attentions to my sister. Enough, she felt herself alone, perhaps deserted, and so much the more readily listened to the sincere expressions of an earnest and reserved, true and estimable man of honor, who had passionately bestowed upon her an affection of which he was in general no prodigal. But as it was I had to yield to it, though I did not cease to say with confidence privately to myself, that if the brother had not been absent it could not have gone so far with the friend.

My friend and probable brother-in-law was very anxious that I should return home, because by my means a freer intercourse would be possible, which the feelings of this man, thus unexpectedly overcome by a tender passion, seemed to stand in extreme need of. Accordingly on his hasty departure he received my promise speedily to follow him.

I now hoped that Merk, who was unoccupied, would prolong his stay at Giessen, so that I might pass some hours of the day with my good Höpfner, while our friend should spend his time on the Frankfort *Gelehrte Anzeigen* ; but he was not to be moved, and as love had driven my brother-in-law, so hate drove my friend away from the University. For as there are certain innate antipathies, as there are some men who cannot bear cats, others who hate this or that, so Merk was a deadly foe of all students, who at that time had fallen into the greatest rudeness at Giessen. I, for my part, fancied them, and should have liked to use them as characters in one of my farces, but he could not bear their sight by day, and at night their clamor robbed him of all good humor. The best part of his youth he had passed in French Switzerland, and afterwards he had enjoyed the agreeable intercourse of courts people, and of men of the world and of business, as well as of cultivated literary men ; many military persons, in whom an aspiration for intellectual culture had been developed, sought his company, and thus his life had moved in a highly

cultivated circle. That all disorder should vex him, was accordingly not to be wondered at ; but his dislike to the students was more vehement than was fitting for a steady-minded man, although he very often made me laugh outright, by his witty descriptions of their monstrous appearance and behavior. Höpfer's invitations and my entreaties were of no avail, and I had, as soon as possible, to trudge back with him to Wetzlar.

I could hardly wait to introduce him to Lotte ; but his presence in this circle did not contribute to my enjoyment. As Mephistopheles, wherever he goes, hardly ever carries a blessing, so he, by his indifference to this beloved person, caused me no joy, though he did not bring me to wavering. I might have known beforehand, if I had recollected, that such slight, elegant persons, who spread a living gladness all around them, without making any further pretensions, would not particularly please him. He at once preferred the Juno-like form of one of her friends, and as he lacked time to make any intimate acquaintances, he reproached me quite severely, because I had not devoted my attention to this splendid figure, and so much the more because she was free from any connexion. He thought I did not understand my own advantage, and above all, he did not like to see here also, my especial passion for wasting time.

If it is dangerous for a man to make his friend acquainted with the excellences of the woman he loves, because the friend may also find them charming and desirable, the opposite danger is not less, namely, that of being led astray by his dislike. This was not indeed the present case, for the image of her loveliness was too deeply impressed on me to be so easily effaced, but his presence and his urgent persuasion hastened my determination to leave the place.. He brought most attractively before me a journey on the Rhine, which he was then intending to take with his wife and son, and excited a desire at last to see those objects with my own eyes, which I had often heard spoken of with envy. When he had gone I separated from Charlotte with a purer conscience, indeed, than from Frederica, but yet not without pain. This relation also, by habit and indulgence, had on my side become more passionate than it ought, but she and her betrothed had borne themselves in a cheerful, unembarrassed manner, which could not

have been more beautiful and charming, and the security arising from this very source caused me to forget all danger. Meanwhile, I could not conceal from myself that this adventure was near its end, for the union of the young man with this lovely girl only waited for his advancement, which was then expected; and as a man who is in any degree resolute, attempts even to desire that which cannot be escaped, so I determined to withdraw voluntarily, before I should be driven away by the sight of what would be intolerable.

BOOK THIRTEENTH.

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THIRTEENTH BOOK.

I HAD agreed with Merk that we should meet in the spring at Coblentz at Frau Von Laroche's. I had sent my baggage down the Lahn to Frankfort by an opportunity which offered, and now I wandered along this beautiful river, so lovely in its windings, and so various in its shores, in respect to my will, free, but by no means so as to my feelings. I was in that state of mind in which the silent presence of nature is so beneficent. My eye, accustomed to discover the different beauties of the landscape, rioted in the sight of near and distant objects, of rocks covered with bushes, sunny tree tops, the moist meadows, the castles on the heights, and the blue mountain ranges which, from afar, seemed to entice the beholders to themselves. I wandered down the right shore of the river, which glided along its channel in the sunshine at some distance below me, partly hidden by a hedge of willows. Then the old wish to be able worthily to imitate such objects rose in me again. By chance I had a handsome pocket-knife in my left hand, and at the moment an irresistible impulse to fling it directly into the stream came from the bottom of my soul. If I should see it fall in, my wish to become an artist would be accomplished, but if the sinking of the knife should be hidden by the overhanging willows, I determined to desist both from the wish and the endeavor. This whim had no sooner arisen in me than it was put in practice. Without thinking of the usefulness of the knife, which combined several instruments in itself, with my left hand as I held it, I hurled it violently towards the river. But here I experienced that deceitful ambiguity of oracles, which was so bitterly complained of in antiquity. The sinking of the knife in the river was hidden from me by the extreme twigs of the willows, but the water which

rose from the fall, sprang like a powerful fountain up into the air and was perfectly visible. I did not explain this appearance in my own favor, and the doubt it aroused was afterwards the cause of my prosecuting that kind of labor interruptedly and negligently, and thus itself fulfilled the import of the oracle. For the moment at least the outer world became of less value in my eyes. I yielded myself to my own imaginations and fancies, and by degrees left the pleasantly situated castles and villages of Weilburg, Limburg, Diez, and Nassau behind me, walking for the most part alone, but frequently for a short time joining myself to some other traveller.

After journeying for some days in this pleasant way I arrived at Ems, where I took the soft bath several times, and then set off down the river in a boat. Then the old Rhine revealed himself to me. I was in raptures with the beautiful situation of Oberlahnstein, but beyond everything in splendor and majesty appeared the great castle of Ehrenbreitstein, which stood forth fully armed in its power and might. In most lovely contrast lay at its foot the neatly built little place called Thal, where I had no difficulty in finding the house of privy councillor Laroche. I had been announced by Merk; so that this noble family received me in a very friendly manner, and I was soon looked upon as one of them. My sentimental and literary tendencies bound me to the mother, a genial worldliness to the father, and my youth to the daughters.

The house, at the extreme end of the valley, built above the river on a slight elevation, had a free view down the stream. The chambers were high and spacious, and the walls hung all over with paintings in the fashion of a gallery. The windows on every side served as frames to natural pictures, which were brought into vivid relief by the light of a gentle sun. I thought I had never seen such bright mornings or such splendid evenings.

I was not long the only guest in the house. LEUCHSENRING, who came up from Düsseldorf, was also a member of the congress which was here to be held, partly for artistic purposes, and partly for purposes of friendship. This man was distinguished for an admirable knowledge of modern literature, and on various

journeys—but especially during a residence in Switzerland—had formed many acquaintances. As he was of agreeable and insinuating manner, he had been received with much favor. He carried several little boxes about with him, containing the confidential correspondence of many of his friends; for there was then generally so great openness among men that one could not speak or write to a single person without considering it imparted to a number. People explored their own hearts and those of others, and with the indifference of governments to such communications, the great rapidity of the post, the security of the seal, and the cheapness of the postage, this moral and literary intercourse soon became quite extensive.

Such correspondences, especially with persons of importance, were carefully preserved, and on occasions of friendly meetings select passages were read aloud; and thus, as political essays had little interest, people grew tolerably familiar with the wide expanse of the moral world.

Leuchsenring's little boxes contained many treasures of this kind. The letters of a certain Julie Bondeli were greatly esteemed. She was known as a woman of sense and merit, and as a friend of Rousseau's. Every one who had stood in any kind of relation with this extraordinary man partook of the glory which emanated from him, and in his name a silent brotherhood had been disseminated far and wide.

I liked to be present at these readings, for by them I was transported into an unknown world, and made aware of the real nature of many events that had shortly before taken place. To tell the truth, much of it was without meaning, and Herr Laroche, a vivacious man of the world and of business—who, though a Catholic, had not scrupled to make free in his writings with monks and popes—thought that here also was a fraternity, many worthless individuals of which supported themselves by their connexion with men of real character, to their own advantage, but not to that of those to whom they were attached. For the most part this sturdy man withdrew when the boxes were opened. Sometimes he listened to a few letters, and then some ironical remark was to be expected. Among other things, he once said that this correspondence convinced him more firmly of what he had always

believed, namely, that women might do without sealing-wax ; they needed only to fasten their letters with pins, and they might be certain that they would go safely to the very place. In such a way he was wont to jest with everything out of the circle of real life and activity. In this he followed the peculiarity of his lord and teacher, the minister of the elector of Mayence, Count Stadion, who was certainly not fitted to counterpoise his worldliness and coldness as a boy by reverence for anything mysterious.

An anecdote of the great practical sense of the count may here find a place. Being pleased with the orphaned Laroche, whom he educated, he required of the boy to perform the services of a secretary. He gave him letters to answer, dispatches to prepare, which he often also had to engross, and oftener to write in cypher, to seal, and superscribe. This lasted several years. When the boy had become a youth, and was really able to perform what he supposed he had hitherto been doing, the count led him to a large writing-desk, in which all his letters and packets lay unbroken, preserved as exercises.

Another exercise which the count exacted from his pupil will not receive so universal applause. Laroche was obliged to practise the most careful imitation of his master's hand-writing, in order to spare him the trouble of writing himself. But this talent was not employed in business alone : the young man was the substitute of his teacher in love affairs also. The count was violently in love with a lady of high rank and great talents. While he remained in her society till late at night, his secretary was sitting at home, hammering out the most ardent love-letters. From these the count selected one on his return, and sent it the same night to his beloved, who thus could not help being convinced of the inexhaustible fire of her passionate adorer. Such early experiences were hardly calculated to give the young man a very exalted idea of written expressions of love.

An inappeasable hatred of priestcraft was one of the confirmed peculiarities of this man, who had served two spiritual electors. Probably it had its origin in the observation of the coarse and inane foolery which the monks practised in many places in Germany, and by which they corrupted the minds of those with whom they had intercourse, and hindered and destroyed every sort of culture.

His letters on monasticism excited great attention. They were received with much applause by all Protestants, and by many Catholics.

But if Herr von Laroche was the opposite of everything that could be called sensibility, and even guarded himself against the appearance of it, he did not attempt to conceal a tender fatherly attachment to his eldest daughter, who was indeed in every respect lovely. She was rather of short than tall figure, and slenderly formed; with a free, pleasing person, the blackest eyes, and a complexion which could not be imagined purer and more blooming. She also loved her father, and was inclined to his way of thinking. Being an active man of business, most of his time was occupied in the duties of his office, and as the guests who visited his house were attracted by his wife and not by himself, society could afford him little pleasure. At meals he was cheerful and entertaining, and sought at least to keep his table free from the sauce of sentimentality.

Whoever knows the tendencies and mode of thought of Frau von Laroche,—and a long life and numerous works have made her known and esteemed by every German,—might perhaps suppose that here must have arisen a domestic difficulty; but this was far from being the case. She was the most wonderful of women; I never knew one that could be compared to her. Slender and delicately formed, and rather tall, she had preserved, even into her old age, a certain elegance of person as well as of manner, which was in a very pleasing medium between the bearing of a lady of noble rank and that of the wife of a worthy citizen. Her dress was for many years the same. A little cap, with neat tabs, was very becoming to her small head and delicate features, and a brown or grey gown gave repose and dignity to her presence. She expressed herself well, and always knew how, by sentiment, to give significance to what she said. Her manner was perfectly the same towards all persons. But yet what was most peculiar in her is not described by all this; indeed, it is difficult to describe it. She appeared to be interested in everything, but, at the bottom, nothing influenced her. She was always gentle, and could bear everything without suffering; the jesting of her husband, the tenderness of her friends, the sweetness of

her children, all of these she met in the same way. She was always herself without ever being affected by good or evil in the world, or in literature by excellence or weakness. To this feature of her mind she owed the independence which she maintained to a very advanced age, in many sad and sorrowful events. But, not to be unjust, I must mention that her two sons, who were then children of dazzling beauty, often drew from her a kind of expression different from that which served for her daily use.

Thus I lived in a new and wonderfully charming environment for a time, until Merk arrived with his family. Here new affinities at once arose, for while the two ladies came into near intercourse, Merk, as a man skilled in the world and in affairs, educated and travelled, had an intimate attraction for Herr von Laroche. The boy became the companion of the boys, while the daughters fell to me, and the eldest of them very soon began to please me particularly. That is a delightful sensation which a new passion begins to stir in us, when the old one is not yet entirely departed. Thus, at sunset we take pleasure in seeing the moon rise on the opposite side of the heavens, and rejoice in the double splendor of both luminaries.

Now there was no lack of rich entertainment, both in and out of the house. We wandered through the country round ; we mounted Ehrenbreitstein on this side of the river, and the Carthause on the other. The city, the Moselle bridge, the ferry which bore us over the Rhine, all afforded the most various pleasures. The new castle was not yet built ; they led us to the place where it was to stand, and caused the designs for the building to be shown us.

In this genial situation, nevertheless, that unsocial and fault-finding disposition which shows its effects in cultivated as well as in uncultivated circles, developed itself. Merk, who was both cold and restless, had not long listened to the reading of Leuchsenring's letters, before he uttered many waggish remarks, not only on the things which were said, but also on the persons and their relations ; and to me, in private, revealed the strangest matters which had been concealed behind his jests. He never spoke of political secrets, or of anything that could have had a definite reference. He only made me notice men who, without

special talents, succeed in gaining personal influence by means of mere tact, and by acquaintance with many persons seek to make something of themselves ; I had afterwards occasion to observe more of the same sort. As such persons usually do not stay long in a place, but, as travellers, are now here and now there, novelty is always in their favor, a fact for which they are not to be envied or disturbed ; indeed it is a matter of course, as every comer has often experienced to his advantage, and every stayer to his prejudice.

Let that be as it may, it is enough that from that time we cherished a kind of unquiet or rather envious attention to those people who, for their own purposes, travelled hither and thither, cast anchor in every city, and sought to obtain influence in some families at least. I have depicted a soft and tender brother of this guild in Father Brey, and another, of more force and talent, in a farce hereafter to be published with the title of "Satyrus, or the Deified Wood Devil," if not with justice, at least with good humor. Meanwhile, the strange elements of our little society worked tolerably on each other ; we were restrained partly by our own habits and sense of propriety, but partly also by the peculiar manner of our hostess. She was usually but slightly affected by what was going on around her, and constantly surrendered herself to a kind of ideal notion which she could always express in a friendly and benevolent way. She was thus able to soften everything sharp, and to smoothe everything rough, which might arise in the circle around her.

Merk blew the retreat at just the right moment, so that we parted from each other on the best terms. I went up the Rhine, with him and his, in a yacht which was returning to Mayence, and though it went but slowly of itself, we also took care to persuade the captain not to be in any haste. Thus we enjoyed, at leisure, the endless variety of objects which, in the most splendid weather, seemed to gain in beauty every hour, and to assume new dimensions, and a more attractive appearance. I only wish, while I mention the names of Rheinfels, St. Goar, Bacharach, Bingen, Elfeld, and Biberich, that every one of my readers was able to recall those scenes into his memory.

Our drawing-pencils had been busy, and had, at least, assisted

us in gaining a firmer impression of the thousand-fold variations of those magnificent shores. Our friendship had also become stronger by being so long together, by confidential communications upon so many things, to such a degree, that Merk gained a great influence over me, and I became necessary, as a companion, to the happiness of his existence. My glance, sharpened by nature, returned to the study of art, for which the Frankfort collection of pictures and engravings offered the best opportunity ; to the kindness of Messrs. Etling, Ehrenreich, but especially to the excellent Nothnagel I was greatly indebted. My desire to see nature in art became a passion which, in its highest moments, could not but appear to others, even to connoisseurs, almost like lunacy ; and how could such an inclination find better nourishment than in a persistent study of the excellent works of the Netherlanders ! But that I might make myself actually acquainted with these things, Nothnagel provided me with a cabinet where I found everything necessary for oil painting, and I painted from nature some simple subjects of still life, one of which, a knife-handle of tortoise-shell inlaid with silver, so astonished my master, who came to see me at the close of an hour, that he declared some one of his subordinate artists must have been with me during the time.

Had I gone on patiently to practise on such subjects, to give them light and shade, and to bring out their superficial peculiarities, I should have acquired a certain skill, and have opened for myself the way to higher attainments. But the fault of dilettanti pursued me, namely, the beginning with what is most difficult, or rather the attempt to perform the impossible, and so I ventured into greater undertakings in which I stuck fast, both because they were far beyond my technical capacities, and because I could not always maintain, pure and active, that loving attention and quiet industry by which even the beginner can accomplish something.

I was also, at the same time, carried into a high sphere by finding an opportunity of purchasing some fine copies in plaster of antique heads. The Italians, who travelled from fair to fair, often brought good specimens of those things, and sold them at reasonable prices, after they had taken moulds of them. In this way I

provided myself with a little museum ; by degrees I obtained the heads of the Laocöon, of his sons, and of the daughters of Niobe. I also bought copies in miniature of the most important works of antiquity out of the collection of a deceased friend of art, and so endeavored to revive in myself that great impression which I had received at Mannheim.

While I was now endeavoring to sustain and occupy everything of talent, fancy, and every other impulse that was alive in me, I employed a good part of the day, according to the wish of my father, in the duties of an advocate, for the practice of which, by chance, I had the best opportunities. After the death of my grandfather, my uncle Textor had entered the council, and put into my hands those lesser affairs to which I was equal ; and the brothers Schlosser did the same. I made myself familiar with the cases ; my father read them also with great pleasure, as by means of his son he was again brought into an activity of which he had long been deprived. We discussed the different matters, and then I made the necessary arguments. We had an excellent copyist, on whom we could rely for everything relating to legal formalities, and thus this occupation became an agreeable one. It was the more so as it brought me nearer to my father, who was fully content with what I did in this particular, and willingly permitted everything else that I was carrying on ; in the eager expectation that I should soon reap a harvest of fame as an author.

As in every epoch all things are connected together by the manifold ramifications of ruling opinions and tendencies, so by degrees all those maxims, according to which religion and morals were treated, came to be followed in the science of law. A humane feeling became prevalent among both the young and the old, among attorneys and judges, and all endeavored to act in the highest degree as men, even in legal affairs. Prisons were improved, crimes pardoned, punishments made milder, and legitimations of children easier ; divorces were looked upon with favor, as were marriages between the higher and lower classes ; and one of our best advocates gained the highest fame by procuring for the son of an executioner the entrance into a college of physicians. In vain guilds and corporations opposed ; one barrier after

another was broken through. Tolerance of religious parties towards each other was not only preached but practised, and the existing civil relations were threatened with a still greater inroad when the toleration of the Jews was proclaimed to that good-natured period with understanding, acuteness, and power. Those new subjects of legal discussion which lay without the limits of the law, and of tradition, and only claimed an impartial consideration and friendly sympathy, demanded also a more natural and vivid style. Here a pleasing field was opened to us youths, in which we right gladly labored, and I recollect very well that on such an occasion an imperial councillor sent me a very handsome complimentary letter. The French *plaidoyés* served us as models, and stimulated us.

We were thus in the way of becoming better orators than jurists, for which the substantial George Schlosser once blamed me as he pointed it out. I had told him that I had read to my friends a controversial essay in favor of our side, written with much energy, on which they had displayed great satisfaction. He replied, "You have in this shown yourself more a writer than an advocate; the question should never be how such an argument pleases the client, but how it affects the judge."

As it is the fact that no one has so earnest and pressing matters to occupy his day, but that at evening he can find time enough to go to the play, it happened to me that in the want of a really good stage, my thoughts were incessantly directed to the German theatre, with the desire of discovering how any worthy effects might be produced in it. Its condition in the second half of the last century is well enough known, and every one who wishes for information about it can find assistance everywhere at hand. For that reason I shall here only insert some general remarks.

The success of the stage rests more on the talents and skill of the performers than the worth of the pieces. This was especially the case with those half or wholly extemporary plays where all depended on the humor and the talent of the comedians. The materials of such pieces must be taken from the most common life, and adapted to the manners of the people who are spectators. From this immediate adaptation comes the great applause

which those plays have always gained. They were native in South Germany, where they are still preserved with the simple necessity of giving some alteration to the most comical characters by change of persons. Yet the German drama soon assumed, in accordance with the serious character of the nation, a tendency to moral subjects which outward influences heightened still more. The question arose among strict Christians whether the theatre was one of those sinful things which were to be avoided at all events, or one of those indifferent things which can be good for the good, and are evil only to the evil. Zealous sectarians denied the latter, and held fast to the opinion that no clergyman should ever enter the theatre. The opposite could not be maintained with effect without declaring the theatre to be not only harmless, but positively useful. But in order to be useful, it must have moral character and purpose, and to this end it developed itself so much the more readily in North Germany as by a kind of half-taste comic characters were banished. These had to yield the stage, although persons of understanding defended them, especially as such persons had already turned from the coarseness of the German merry-andrews to the delicacy and elegance of the Italian and French harlequins. Even Scapin and Crispin vanished by degrees; I saw the latter played by Koch, in his old age, for the last time.

The romances of Richardson had already called the attention of the world at large to a more refined morality. The strict and inevitable results of a *faux pas* in a woman were terribly depicted in Clarissa. Lessing's Miss Sarah Sampson treated the same subject, and the Merchant of London exhibited a misled young man in the most frightful situation. The French dramas had the same purpose, but went about it more moderately, and pleased by means of some compromise at the close. Diderot's *Père de Famille*, the Honorable Criminal, the Vinegar-dealer, the Philosopher without knowing it, Eugenie, and many others of the same kind, were adapted to the honest spirit of citizenship and family, which began to prevail more and more. Among us, the Thankful Son, the Deserter from Love of his Children, and that whole class, went the same way. The Minister, Clementine, and the other pieces of Gehler, the German Father by Gemmingen, all of

which brought agreeably to view the worth of the middle and even of the lower class, delighted the great public. Eckhoff, by means of his noble person and character, which imparted to the function of actor a dignity it had not before possessed, brought the chief parts of such pieces into uncommon relief ; himself an upright man, he succeeded perfectly in the expression of that quality.

While the German drama was thus tending to complete effeminacy, Schröder arose, both as an actor and writer, and translated several English comedies, a work to which he was led through the alliance of Hamburg with England. In doing so, he could use his materials only in the most general way, for the original plays are mostly formless, and even if they begin well with a distinct plan, are sure to lose themselves at last. The sole object of their authors seems to have been to bring forward the most extravagant scenes, but one accustomed to a chaste work of art does not willingly see himself driven forth into a boundless chaos. Besides, they are pervaded by an essence so wild, rude, mean, and barren, which is likewise so prominent as to be intolerable, that it is difficult to free the plot and the characters from all their coarse imperfections. They are as tough as well as dangerous kind of food, adapted to the use and digestion only of a great and half corrupted populace at a certain period of time. Schröder did more for these things than is commonly known ; he altered them, thoroughly adapted them to the German taste, and softened them as far as possible. Still there remains in them a bitter kernel, because they very often turn upon abuse of persons, whether they deserve abuse or not. In these pieces, which immediately took a wide possession of the stage, lay concealed a counterpoise to a too sensitive morality ; the mutual influence of both these forces fortunately prevented a monotony into which we should otherwise have fallen.

The kindly and magnanimous nature of the Germans is opposed to all abuse of persons. But as no one, however clearly he thinks, is secure that things contrary to his own inclinations will not be insinuated into his mind ; and as comedy almost always presupposes or excites a kind of malicious pleasure in the beholder in order to amuse him, so a natural way was hit upon to do what had hitherto been thought an unnatural thing.

This was to bring down the higher ranks, and more or less to attack them. Writers both in prose and poetry had up to this time taken care to touch upon neither the court nor the nobility. On that side Rabener refrained from all jesting, and kept within a lower circle. Zachariä said much of country noblemen, depicted their whims and peculiarities, but without undervaluing them. Thümmel's Wilhemine, a witty little composition, as pleasing as it was bold, gained great applause perhaps from the very reason that the author, a nobleman and courtier, handled his own class without mercy. But Lessing took the most decided step in Emilia Galotti, in which the passions and deceitful relations of the higher regions are painted keenly and bitterly. All these things were perfectly adapted to the excited spirit of the time, and men of less sense and talent thought they might do the same, or even more. Among these was Grossmann, who, in six repulsive dishes, served up to the malicious public all the dainties of his dirty kitchen. A reputable man, Hofrath Reinhardt, played the major-domo of this disgusting table to the comfort and edification of all the guests. From this time forward theatrical villains were chosen from the higher classes; the person must, however, be a gentleman of the bed-chamber, or at least a private secretary, in order to be worthy of such a distinction. But for the very wickedest characters, the highest offices and places in the catalogue of the court and the civil functionaries were selected; in this aristocratic society judges appeared as rascals of the first order.

Though I fear that I have gone beyond the point of time of which I am here speaking, I will return to myself in order to mention the impulse which I felt to devote my leisure hours to the dramatic plans I had previously formed.

By persistent study of Shakspeare's works I had so expanded my mind that the narrow space of the stage, and the short time allotted to one play, seemed to me not at all adequate to the presentation of an important subject. The life of the sturdy Götz Von Berlichingen, written by himself, inclined me to the historical mode of treatment, and my imagination so extended itself that my dramatic form also exceeded all theatrical limits, and strove more and more to approach the living events. I had

spoken minutely of the matter, as I went on with it, to my sister, who entered into such things with mind and soul. I spoke to her of it so often without doing anything towards its accomplishment, that she at last kindly but impatiently urged me not to expend my words always into the air, but to set firmly down on paper what was so constantly in my mind. Decided by her persuasion, I began to write one morning, without having any sketch or even plot beforehand. I wrote the first scenes, and at evening they were read to Cornelia. She bestowed much applause on them, though with the limitation of a doubt whether I should go on in the same manner; she even expressed a decided unbelief in my perseverance. This only roused me the more; I worked at it the next day, and the third day. Her hope increased with the results of each day's labor, and for myself, at every step everything gained new life, and the whole material of the piece seemed to become completely mine. Thus I kept uninterruptedly to the work, and went straight forward with it, without looking either backward or right or left, and in some six weeks I had the pleasure of seeing the manuscript stitched together. I read it to Merk, who criticised it intelligently and kindly. I sent it to Herder, who treated it severely and with no love. He did not fail, without delay, in several satirical poems to call me a variety of nick-names on account of it. I would not allow this to lead me astray, but looked sharply at what I had done; the cast was made, and the only question was, how to make the best of it. I saw plainly that here no one could advise me, and when, after some time, I could look at my work as foreign to myself, I perceived that in the endeavor to overlook the unity of time and place, I had infringed upon the higher unity which is thus made doubly necessary. As I had resigned myself to the inward passion and to my imagination, without any specific design, I had, at the beginning, kept close to the subject, and the first acts could easily pass for what they were intended to be. In what followed, however, and especially towards the end, a strange passion had carried me unconsciously away. I had myself fallen in love with Adelheid while attempting to represent her as lovely; involuntarily my pen was dedicated to her only, my interest in her fate increased greatly,

and as, moreover, towards the end Götz is restrained from action, and at last only returns to an unfortunate participation in the Peasants' war, nothing was more natural than that a charming woman should put him out of the sight of our author, who had shaken off the chains of art, and was trying his powers in a new field. I soon recognised this deficiency, or rather this blamable superfluity, since the nature of my poetic faculty ever inclined me to unity. In consequence, instead of the biography of Götz and German antiquities, my mind became occupied with my own work, to which I strove to give a more historical and national character, and to remove from it what was fabulous or merely the fruit of my own passion. In this I sacrificed much, but the inclination of the man had to yield to the conviction of the artist. Thus, for example, I had done something entirely to my own mind in a terrific night-scene with gypsies, where Adelheid appeared and wrought wonders by her beautiful presence. This was banished on a more careful examination, and in the fourth and fifth acts some minutely described love passages between Franz and his noble lady were greatly condensed, and only allowed to appear in their chief points.

Thus, without altering anything in the first manuscript, which, in fact, I still possess in its original form, I determined to write the whole over again, which I did with such industry that in a few weeks the piece lay before me completely renewed. I went about it so much the more zealously as I had no design of ever printing this second copy, but regarded it also as a preparatory exercise, which was to serve as the basis for a further attempt that I designed to accomplish with greater care and reflection.

As one day I was beginning to tell Merk of my numerous designs for this work, he laughed at me and asked, what was the use of this eternal writing and re-writing? The thing is changed by this means, but seldom improved; the true way was to see what effect it would produce, and then to try some new subject. "Make hay while the sun shines," cried he, in the words of the proverb; "delaying and loitering make fickle men." I replied to him, that I should dislike to offer a work which I had done with so much passion, to a bookseller, and perhaps receive a most decided answer in the negative; for how could they form a just

judgment of a young, nameless, and audacious writer ? Already as my fear of the press vanished by degrees, I had wished to see my other pieces, which I thought a good deal of, printed, but found no publisher inclined to undertake them.

Here the artistic and mercantile genius of my friend was at once brought into play. He had already got into relations with scholars and booksellers, by means of the Frankfort Gazette. It was his opinion that we should print a work of so uncommon a character, at our own expense ; he had no doubt we should find our advantage in it. He was in the habit, common to him with many others, of reckoning up the profit of booksellers, which is indeed great on many works, especially if we leave out of the account the large amount lost by other writings and business enterprises. It was accordingly agreed, that I should procure the paper and he provide for the printing. So we went briskly at it, and I was not at all displeased as by degrees I saw my wild dramatic sketches transformed into clean proof sheets ; they were really neater than I had myself expected. We finished the work, and it was sent out in many packages. It was not long before a great commotion arose everywhere ; the attention it drew became universal. But because with our limited arrangements we were not able to send copies rapidly enough to all places, a counterfeit edition suddenly appeared. Besides this, as no returns, or at least the most meagre, could so soon be expected for the copies we had supplied, and as being a young man, my treasury was by no means overflowing, I found myself at the very time that I was receiving great attention and even applause from all sides, in the greatest perplexity as to how I should pay for the paper on which I had made the world acquainted with my talents. Merk, who knew better than I how to look out for himself, had, on the other hand, the best hopes that we should soon get our money back again, but I never found out that we did.

I had already made acquaintance with the public and the reviewers at my own expense, in the little pamphlets which I had published anonymously. I was thus tolerably prepared for praise and blame, especially as for many years I had constantly observed how those writers were treated who had obtained my own particular attention. In these cases, even in my uncertainty, I

could clearly perceive how much was said that was groundless, one-sided, and arbitrary. The same thing now happened to me, and if I had not already had a standing-place of my own, how must I have been confounded by the contradictions of cultivated men! There appeared for example in the *Deutscher Merkur*, a long and well-meaning review by some man of contracted mind. I could not agree with him where he found fault, and still less when he declared how the subject might have been treated otherwise. I was therefore rejoiced to find immediately after it a genial explanation by Wieland, who in general took a view entirely opposite to this critic, and defended me against him. Nevertheless, his article was printed, and I saw in it an example of the shallow mode of thought of educated and enlightened men. How would it be with the great public?

The pleasure of discussing such things and gaining clearer views of them with Merk, was of short duration. The keen-sighted Landgravine of Hesse-Darmstadt took him in her suite on her journey to St. Petersburg. The copious letters which he wrote me, gave me a wide prospect of the world which I the more easily made my own, as the pictures were drawn by a friendly and well known hand. But notwithstanding this, I was for a long time very lonely; just at this important epoch, I was deprived of the sympathy and advice of his clear and luminous mind, of which I then stood greatly in need.

It happened to me as to all who venture into the world, especially as authors. They are like men who resolve to be soldiers and go to war courageously, determining to undergo danger and difficulties, to suffer wounds and pains, and even death, but who never think of the particular chances of being most disagreeably surprised by the evils they thus indefinitely expect. As the greater part of the public is more influenced by the material than by the mode of treatment, the interest of young men in my pieces was mostly related to their subjects. They thought they saw in them a standard under whose guidance all the wildness and rudeness that is in youth could get room to act; the very best heads, which had before been haunted by something similar, were carried away. I still have a letter from Bürger, an excellent man, and in many respects without a peer,

written I know not to whom, which can serve as a weighty voucher of the effect produced at the time, by the appearance of my play. On the other hand, grave men blamed me for having set club-law out in too favorable colors, and attributed to me the idea of bringing back again those anarchical times. Others took me for a man of profound learning, and besought me to publish the original narrative of the good Götz, with notes; for this I felt myself by no means qualified, though I permitted my name to be put on the title-page of the new impression. I was taken for a careful and skilful gardener, simply because I had succeeded in gathering the flowers of a great existence. Nevertheless, my learning and profound knowledge were called in question by others. A business man of reputation unexpectedly makes me a visit. I take this as a very high honor, the more because he begins his conversation with the praise of my Götz von Berlichingen, and of my excellent acquaintance with German history. Still I am confounded on perceiving that he has come for the express purpose of informing me that Götz von Berlichingen was not a brother-in-law of Franz von Sickingen, and that in this poetic relationship I had gone altogether against history. I sought to excuse myself by saying, that Götz himself called him so; but the reply was that this was a form of speech which only expressed a near, friendly relation, just as in later times we called postillions brothers-in-law, without being united to them by family ties. I returned my thanks for this information as well as I could, and lamented that the mistake could not now be remedied. This was also regretted on the part of my informant, who in the most friendly manner urged me to further study of German history and political institutions, for which he offered me his library, of which I afterwards made good use.

The most amusing thing of this sort which occurred, was the visit of a bookseller, who, with good-natured frankness, applied for a dozen such pieces and promised to pay well for them. No one will find it difficult to suppose that we made ourselves very merry at this, and yet he was not in fact so far out of the way, for I was already contemplating a career through German history from this point forwards and backwards, and a similar transfusion

of the principal events, a laudable design, which, like many others, was put to naught by the swift, rushing flight of time.

This play did not exclusively occupy its author, but while it was conceived, written, re-written, printed, and circulated, many other images and plans were moving in his mind. Those which were to be treated dramatically, gained the preference, in being most frequently thought over, and brought towards execution. At the same time, there was developed a transition to another mode of writing, which cannot be reckoned dramatic, and yet has an intimate relationship to that. This transition took place chiefly through a peculiar habit of the writer of changing soliloquies into dialogues.

Accustomed to spend his time most happily in society, he transformed lonely thinking into social entertainment, and in the following way. He was in the habit, whenever he was alone, of calling some person or other of his acquaintance, in spirit to himself. He invited him to sit down, walked forward and back, stood still before him, and discussed with him the subject which was in his mind. The visitor answered as was necessary, or expressed his assent or dissent by means of good mimicry,—as, in such expressions, every man has something peculiar to himself. Then the speaker went on, to carry out further what seemed to please his guest, or to limit and define more exactly what he had disagreed with, and at last politely gave up the idea. In this, the strangest thing was, that he never chose persons with whom he was intimately acquainted, but such as he seldom saw, and many who lived at great distances from him, and with whom he stood only on terms of transient acquaintance. They were mostly persons of a receptive rather than a communicative turn of mind, those whose clear perceptions are ready to look calmly into things within the scope of their vision; however, he often called to these dialectic exercises people of contradictory ideas. To this purpose individuals of both sexes, and of every age and condition, adapted themselves, and appeared complaisant and agreeable in the conversation, which was always on subjects with which they were familiar, and which they liked. To many, it would have appeared strange enough, could they have been aware how often

they were summoned to such ideal discussions, when it would have been difficult for them to attend a real one.

How nearly such a dialogue in this spirit is related to a written correspondence is plain enough, only that in the latter we see a previous confidence responded to, and in the former, a new, ever-changing, unanswered feeling, which creates itself. But as that weariness was to be described, with which mortals regard life without being driven to it by necessity, it at once occurred to the writer to exhibit his thoughts in letters, for every morbid state of feeling is the birth, the pupil of loneliness ; whoever resigns himself to unhappiness, flees from all contradiction, and what is more opposed to his inward condition than cheerful society ? The enjoyment others find in life, is to him a painful reproach, and thus he is forced back into himself, by that which should draw him forth out of himself. If he then wishes to express his feelings, it will be in letters, for a written effusion, whether joyful or gloomy, does not come into immediate contact with any one, and an answer with contrary views gives the solitary soul opportunity to confirm itself in its own fancies, occasion to indurate itself yet more. The letters of Werther, which are written in this tone, have still such a manifold attraction, because their various contents were first uttered in such ideal dialogues with several persons, while in the composition itself they appeared to be directed only to a single sympathizing friend. To say more of the method of a little work, on which so much has been said, would hardly be advisable, but concerning its contents something may be added.

Disgust with life has its physical and its moral causes. The former we commit to the investigations of the physician, the latter to those of the moralist. In a matter which has so often been treated, we shall consider only the crisis in which the appearance is most distinct. All satisfaction in life is based upon the regular recurrence of outward things. The alternation of day and night, of the seasons of the year, of flowers and fruits, and whatever else returns from time to time, which we can and ought to enjoy, these are the proper impelling powers of the earthly life. The more open we are to these pleasures, so much happier we are ; but if the variety of these things appears before us without our participating

in it, if we are inhospitable towards visitors so genial, then comes upon us the greatest evil, the heaviest disease, and we regard life as a disgusting burden. It is related of an Englishman, that he hung himself in order to avoid the daily necessity of dressing and undressing. I knew an honest gardener, the overseer in the laying out of a large park, who once cried with vexation, "Must I always see these clouds moving from East to West?" The anecdote is told of one of our most admirable men, that when he once saw the earth becoming green in the spring, he wished it might, for a change, appear red at least once. Such are the symptoms of that weariness of life, which not seldom ends in suicide, and which, with thinking and self-involved men, was at that time more frequent than could be believed.

Nothing more powerfully causes this weariness than the return of love. The first love, it is justly said, is the only one, for in, and through the second, the highest character of love is lost. The idea of the Eternal and Infinite, by which it is elevated and supported, is destroyed, and it appears perishable like all other things that return. The separation of the sensual from the moral, which, in the complicated, cultivated world, severs the sentiments of love and desire, produces here, also, an exaggeration which cannot have good results.

Besides, a young man soon becomes aware from others, if not from himself, that moral epochs change just as much as seasons of the year. The favor of the great, the grace of the powerful, the support of the active, the attachment of the mass, and the love of individuals, all go up and down, and we can as little hold them fast as the sun, moon, and stars. Still, these things are not mere natural events; they escape us through our own fault or that of others, by fate or by fortune, but they change, and we are never sure of them.

But what gives most pain to the sensitive youth, is the ceaseless return of his faults, for how late is it that we come to understand that while we are cultivating our virtues we are likewise developing our defects. The former rest on the latter as on their root, and the latter send forth branches in obscurity with as much strength and activity, as the former do in the open light. Because we exercise our virtues, for the most part, with the will and

consciousness, but are taken unawares by our faults, the former but seldom give us pleasure, and the latter constantly cause us trouble and pain. Herein is the hardest part of self-knowledge, one which, indeed, makes it almost impossible. Add to this, a boiling, youthful blood, an imagination easy to be paralysed by individual objects and the uncertain movements of the day, and an impatient striving to escape from such a dilemma will not be thought unnatural.

Such gloomy ideas and tendencies, however, which lead the mind that resigns itself to them into an infinite waste, could not have been so decidedly evolved in the youth of Germany, had not an outward impulse stirred them up and incited them to this sad business. This was afforded by the English literature, and especially its poetry, whose great beauties are accompanied by an earnest melancholy, which it imparts to every one who studies it. The gifted Briton sees himself surrounded from youth by a world full of meaning, which calls his powers all into action; sooner or later he perceives that he must exert his whole understanding in order to satisfy its demands. How many of their poets have led in youth a loose and impetuous life, and have early obtained the right of lamenting the vanity of human things! How many of them have tried their fortune in worldly business, in parliament, at court, in the ministry, and in embassies have played partly the higher and partly the lower parts, have participated in civil disturbances and revolutions of state and government, and have had mournful more frequently than joyous experiences, if not in themselves, in their friends and patrons! How many have been banished, outlawed, cast into prison, and deprived of their possessions!

But to be a spectator of events so great, calls the man to be serious, and whither can seriousness conduct but to the contemplation of the fickleness and worthlessness of all earthly things? The German is inclined to be serious, and so the English poetry was in the highest degree adapted to him; it was also imposing, because it was written from a higher point of view. There is everywhere to be found in it a great, powerful understanding, trained by acquaintance with the world, a deep, tenderness of feeling, an admirable design, and a passionate execution. These

are the most splendid qualities which can be praised in a cultivated, intellectual man, but all together do not make a poet. True poetry proclaims itself in that, like a secular gospel, it can free us by inward serenity and outward grace from the earthly burdens which oppress us. Like a balloon, it bears us with the ballast which hangs upon us into higher regions, where the earth's mazes lie clear before us. The gayest and most serious works have the same end, namely, by a felicitous intellectual representation, to moderate both joy and pain. If in this light we consider the English didactic moral poems, we shall find, on the average, that they exhibit a gloomy dissatisfaction with life. Not only Young's Night Thoughts, in which, beyond all others, this theme is wrought out, but also the other meditative poems tend, before we know it, into this melancholy domain, where a problem is set before the understanding, which it cannot answer, as even the religion which a man can always construct for himself, here forsakes him. Whole volumes might be put together which could serve as a commentary to that fearful text :

“ Then old Age and Experience, hand in hand,
Lead him to death, and make him understand,
After a search so painful and so long,
That all his life he has been in the wrong.”

What besides makes the English poets complete misanthropists, and fills their writings with a disagreeable sense of aversion to everything, is the fact that, in the manifold divisions of their commonwealth, they are compelled to devote the best part of their lives, if not the whole, to one party or the other. As such a writer cannot extol friends to whom he is devoted, and the cause which he supports, because he would thus excite only jealousy and hostility, he exercises his talents in abusing their opponents as much as possible, and in sharpening and even poisoning the weapons of his satire. When this is done by both parties, the world lying between them is destroyed and wholly removed, so that in a great, intelligent, and active assembly of the people, to use the mildest terms, nothing but folly and madness can be found. Even their love poems are full of gloomy

subjects. Here dies a deserted maiden ; there a true lover is drowned, or is devoured by a shark, just as hastily swimming he reaches his beloved ; and if a poet like Gray should recline in a village churchyard, and begin again those well known melodies, he might be sure of assembling around him a crowd of the friends of melancholy. Milton's L'Allegro has first to frighten away the gloom in serious verses, before he can attain to a very moderate joy, and even the cheerful Goldsmith loses himself in mournful sentiments when his *Deserted Village* sets before us, with as much loveliness as sadness, a lost paradise which his traveller seeks over the whole earth to find again.

I do not doubt that lively compositions, cheerful poems, can be shown and set against my opinions ; but the most of these, and the best of them, certainly belong to the earlier epochs ; the modern pieces of this character incline to satire, and especially express contempt for women.

The poems above-mentioned, generally, with their seriousness and their tendency to undermine human nature, were the favorites to which we resorted, in preference to all others, each seeking, according to his own turn of mind, gentle elegiac sadness, or heavy, all-destroying despair. Strangely enough, our father and teacher, Shakspeare, who can shed abroad so pure a gaiety, strengthened this very disease. Hamlet and his soliloquies were ghosts which haunted all youthful minds. Every one knew the chief passages by heart, and liked to recite them, and every one believed that he had the right to be just as melancholy as the prince of Denmark, though he had never seen a ghost, and had no royal father to revenge.

But that all this gloom might not lack a locality perfectly adapted to it, Ossian had beguiled us to *Ultima Thule*, where we wandered in an endless grey moor among projecting mossy grave-stones, and beheld a sky above us covered with heavy clouds. Only in the moonlight did this Caledonian darkness become day ; slain heroes and drooping maidens flitted around us, till at last we fancied that we beheld the spirit of Loda in all his terrors.

In such an atmosphere, with such an environment, in pursuits and studies of this sort, tormented by unsatisfied passions, outwardly without impulse to important action, and with no other

prospect than the necessity of dragging through a stupid, spiritless, common life in wanton gloominess, we made ourselves familiar with the thought that we might always lay life aside when it no longer suited us ; with this idea we got through the disgusts and tedium of the day poorly enough. This way of thinking was universal, and the great influence of Werther was owing to the fact that it everywhere touched a nerve, and openly and plainly exhibited the interior of a morbid, youthful folly. How perfectly the English were acquainted with this kind of wretchedness, is seen in the following significant lines, written before the appearance of Werther :

“ To griefs congenial prone,
More wounds than Nature gave he knew,
While misery's form his fancy drew
In dark ideal hues and horrors not its own.”

Suicide is an event in human nature which, however much has been said and done about it, yet excites the sympathy of every man, and must be discussed anew in every epoch. Montesquieu bestows on his heroes and great men the right of destroying themselves as they think fit, when he says every one must be free to close the fifth act of his tragedy where he pleases. But here we are not speaking of such persons as have led an active and important life, have devoted their days to the service of some great kingdom, or to the cause of freedom, and whom we cannot blame, if when the idea that inspires them has left the earth, they should wish to follow it beyond the grave. We have to do with those who, in the lack of action, and in the most peaceful condition in the world, become, through their own extravagant demands on themselves, disgusted with life. As I was myself in that case, and know best what sort of pain I suffered, and what exertions it cost me to escape from it, I will not conceal the reflections which I made on the various modes of death that might be selected.

It is something so unnatural for a man to tear himself away from life, not only to injure but to destroy himself, that he generally takes some mechanical means of accomplishing his design. When Ajax falls on his sword, it is the weight of his body which

does him the last service. When the warrior binds his shield-bearer not to suffer him to fall into the hands of his enemies, it is an external power which he trusts in, only a moral instead of a physical one. Women seek in water the cooling of their despair, and fire-arms, a completely mechanical instrumentality, assure a speedy accomplishment of the deed with the least exertion. Hanging is not so willingly chosen, because it is an ignoble death. In England, it may be the most frequent, because there, from youth up, people see so many persons hanged without the punishment being altogether dishonorable. By poison, by opening a vein, but a slow adieu is taken of life; the most refined, rapid, and painless death, that by an asp, was worthy of a queen who had passed her life in magnificence and pleasure. But all these are outward aids, are enemies with whom the suicide forms a league against himself.

When I was reflecting on all these methods, and besides was looking into history, I found no one among all those who have killed themselves, who had accomplished the deed with such greatness and freedom as the Emperor Otho. As a general, he was worsted indeed, but yet was far from being brought to extremities, when for the good of the empire, which in a manner belonged to him, and to spare the lives of so many thousands, he determined to leave the world. He spent the evening in a gay supper with his friends, and the next morning was found dead, having plunged a sharp dagger into his heart with his own hand. This method alone seemed to me worthy of imitation, and I convinced myself that whoever could not act like Otho, had no right voluntarily to die. By this conviction I saved myself not so much from the design as from the whim of suicide, which in those splendid times of peace had crept into the unoccupied heads of young men. Amongst a considerable collection of weapons, I had a costly and highly polished dagger. I laid this every night beside my bed, and before I put out the light, tried if I could succeed in forcing the sharp point a couple of inches into my breast. But as I could never make out to do this, I at last laughed aloud at myself, flung away all hypochondriac nonsense, and determined to live. But to be able to do this with cheerfulness, it was necessary that I should complete a poetic task in

which all I had felt, thought, and fancied on this weighty point, should be put into words. I collected for this purpose the elements which, for the few years before, had been moving around me; I brought to mind the things which had the most vexed and pained me, but it would not come into shape; an adventure, a fable was wanting, in which all could be embodied.

At that moment I heard of the death of Jerusalem, and immediately after the report we received the most complete and minute description of the event; the plan of Werther was instantly formed, the whole came together from all sides, and became a solid mass, just as water standing in a vessel at the point of freezing is changed into solid ice by the slightest agitation. To hold fast this strange advantage, to keep before me, and complete in all its parts, a work of such various and significant contents, was for me so much the more a pressing concern, as I had already again fallen into a painful situation, which permitted me still less hope than those which had gone before, and foreboded nothing but unhappiness, if not disgust.

It is always a misfortune to enter into new relations to which we are not accustomed. We are, often against our will, beguiled into a false sympathy. The incompleteness of such a position tortures us, but we see no means, either of making it perfect or of escaping from it.

Frau von Laroche had married her eldest daughter in Frankfort, whither she often came to visit her, though she could not be wholly satisfied with the connexion which she herself had chosen. Instead of feeling pleased with her situation, or endeavoring in any way to alter it, she expended herself in lamentations, so that it was impossible not to think her daughter was actually unhappy, though it was not easy to see in what the unhappiness consisted, as she wanted nothing, and her husband denied her nothing. I was, meanwhile, well received in the house, and came in contact with the whole circle, which consisted of persons, part of whom had contributed to the marriage, and part of whom wished for it a happy result. The Dean of St. Leonhard Dumeix conceived a confidence, or rather a friendship for me. He was the first Catholic clergyman with whom I came into near contact, and who, because he was a man of clear per-

ceptions, gave me beautiful and satisfactory explanations of the external and internal relations of that eldest church. I still recollect perfectly the figure of a well-formed though not young woman, Servières by name. I came also into contact with the Alosino-Schweizer family, and with others, and formed friendly relations with the sons which were long continued. I saw myself at once domesticated in a strange circle, in whose employments, pleasures, and religious exercises even, I was induced, or rather compelled, to take a part. My former relation with the young wife, a truly fraternal one, was continued after the marriage ; my age was the same as hers, and I was the only person in the whole circle in whom she found an echo of that intellectual tone to which, from her youth up, she had been accustomed. We lived on together in a child-like confidence, and although there was no mixture of passion in our intercourse, it was yet sufficiently painful, because she could not feel at home in her new surroundings. She was blessed with the goods of fortune, indeed, but, with all that, after being transferred from the beautiful valley of Ehrenbreitstein, and from a joyous youth into a gloomily situated mercantile house, she was required to act the part of mother to several step-children. In so many new family affairs, without any actual participation and co-operation, I found myself confined in narrow quarters. When they were content with each other the whole appeared to go well enough, but most of the friends of the family turned to me in all difficult cases, which I usually made worse rather than better. It was not long before the whole business became absolutely intolerable to me, and all the disgust at life which generally comes from such relations, appeared to weigh upon me doubly and trebly ; a new and powerful resolution was needed to free myself.

The death of Jerusalem, which was caused by an unfortunate attachment to the wife of a friend, aroused me from the dream. Not only the contemplation of what happened both to him and myself, but the similar state in which I was at the moment, set me into a passionate commotion, so that I could not fail to put into the work which I then commenced, all that glow which arises from the identity of the poetic and the actual. I had outwardly entirely isolated myself, I had even refused the visits of

my friends, and so too I laid aside everything internal which did not immediately belong to the matter in hand. On the other side, I brought together everything which had a direct connexion with my plan, and went over the life I was then living, of which I had not yet made any artistic use. In such circumstances, and after so long and ample secret preparations, I wrote Werther in four weeks, without putting beforehand on paper the plan of the whole, or the treatment of any part.

The manuscript, now finished, lay before me in the rough draught, with few corrections and alterations. It was at once put together, for the binding is to a book pretty much what the frame is to the picture; it is then much easier to see what its worth really is. As I had written this little work almost without knowing it, like a night-walker, I was myself astonished when I went over it to alter and improve. Still in the expectation that, when after some time I could look at it in a kind of distance, much would occur to me that might advantageously be added to it, I gave it to my more youthful friends to read, on whom it had an influence so much the greater, for the reason that I had not told any one of it, or disclosed my design to write it. Here again it was only the material which produced the effect, and accordingly they were brought by it into a state of mind exactly the opposite of mine; by writing this book, more than by any other, I had saved myself from a stormy element, on which, by my own fault and that of others, by fortuitous and voluntary ways of living, by design and by precipitation, by obstinacy and yielding, I had been driven hither and thither in the most violent manner. I felt myself once more happy and free, and entitled to a new life, as if I had made a general confession. The old remedy had this time served me admirably. But while I had gained light and freedom by changing the real into the fictitious, my friends got astray through my work, thinking they must change the fictitious into the real, that they must imitate such a romance, and in any case blow their brains out. What thus, in the beginning, took place among a few, afterwards happened in the great public; and this little book, which had been so useful to me, got a bad name as being highly pernicious.

But all the evils and unhappiness that it is said to have pro-

duced were accidentally almost prevented by the risk it ran of being destroyed soon after its creation. Merk had shortly before returned from St. Petersburg. Because I was always busy I had exchanged but few words with him, and could only let him know the most general features of this Werther which lay so on my heart. One day he visited me, and as he did not seem very talkative, I asked him to listen to me. He seated himself on the sofa, and I began, letter by letter, to read him the story. After I had gone on for a while without getting from him any sign of approval, I took a more pathetic style. What were my feelings, as, after I made a pause, he cast me down most terribly with "Well, now! that is quite fine!" and, without adding another word, left the house. I was wholly beside myself, for, as at first I take pleasure in my things, but have no opinion about them, I believed without a doubt, that I had gone wrong in the subject, the tone, the style, all of which were doubtful, and had produced something entirely inadmissible. Had a fire been at hand, I should at once have flung the work into it; but I took courage, and passed several painful days, till at last he confided to me that he was at that moment in the most dreadful situation into which a man can get. Accordingly he had neither seen nor heard anything, and had no idea what my manuscript was about. The difficulty was in the meanwhile removed as far as possible, and Merk was in the times of his energy exactly the man to fling himself into anything monstrous; his humor had returned, but he was more bitter than before. He scolded at my design to rewrite Werther in rather pointed expressions, and insisted on seeing it printed just as it was. Accordingly a clean manuscript was prepared, which did not remain long in my hands. By accident, on the same day in which my sister married George Schlosser, and the house was illuminated and astir with joyous festivity, came a letter from Weygand, of Leipzig, asking me for a manuscript. I held such a coincidence to be a good omen. I sent him Werther, and was perfectly satisfied when the compensation that I received for it was not entirely consumed by the debts which I had been compelled to run into on account of Götz Von Berlichingen.

The effect of this little book was great, or rather immense,

and for the reason that it exactly touched on the impulses of the time. As it needs but a little match to hurl into the air a powerful mine, so the explosion which followed its publication was mighty, from the fact that the youthful world had already undermined itself. The commotion was so great because it brought extravagant demands, unsatisfied passions, and imaginary griefs to an eruption. From the public it cannot be demanded that it should receive an intellectual work intellectually. In fact, only the contents, the material were regarded, as I had already experienced with my friends, and together with that the old prejudice sprang up, arising from the dignity of a printed book, namely, that it must have a didactic purpose. A true exhibition of life has no such purpose. It neither justifies nor blames, but unfolds ideas and actions in their connexion, and thereby teaches and enlightens.

Of reviews I took little notice. The thing was completely off my hands, and those good people might now see how they could get it off theirs. Yet my friends did not fail to collect these things, and, as they were more initiated in my views, to make themselves merry over them. The "Joys of the Young Werther," with which Nicolai came forth, gave us occasion for no little jesting. This man, otherwise so noble and so rich in merit and in knowledge, had already begun to value everything at a low rate that was not in accordance with his own way of thinking, which, in his extreme intellectual narrowness, he regarded as the only genuine one. He had, therefore, to try his skill against me also, and his pamphlet soon came into our hands. The vignette by Chodowiecki, full of tenderness as it was, gave me much pleasure, especially as at the time I admired that artist extravagantly. The performance itself was cut out of that coarse, domestic tow-cloth, in the manufacture of which the human understanding puts itself to great trouble, in order to make it of the strongest kind. Without perceiving that here nothing could be modified, that Werther's youthful bloom appears from the very first pierced by the deadly worm, the author adopts my treatment of the subject till the two hundred and fourteenth page, and then as the desolate mortal prepares for the fatal step, the keen, spiritual physician succeeds in putting upon

his patient a pistol loaded with hen's blood, which produces a disagreeable spectacle but no damage, Lotte becomes Werther's wife, and the whole thing ends to the satisfaction of everybody.

So much I can recollect, for it never came before my eyes again. The vignette I cut out and put among my favorite engravings. Then I composed a little satirical poem by way of silent and harmless revenge, which, however, cannot be communicated. On this occasion, too, the desire of dramatizing everything got into activity again. I wrote a prosaic dialogue between Lotte and Werther, which was tolerably comical. Werther complains bitterly that his escape by hen's blood has turned out so badly. His life is saved indeed, but he has shot his eyes out. So he is in despair at being her husband and not being able to see her, as the sight of her whole person was, if anything, dearer to him than the sweet peculiarities which he could inform himself of by feeling. Lotte, as might be known, is not particularly well off with a blind husband, and so there is good reason to abuse Nicolai for having interfered in other people's business without any invitation whatever. The whole was written with humor; it painted with free prophecy that unfortunate and arrogant endeavor of Nicolai to meddle with things to which he was not equal, by which he caused himself, and consequently others, no little trouble, and finally destroyed his literary reputation in spite of his decided merits. The original of this jest was never copied, and was worn out years ago. I had a special predilection for the little thing. The pure, ardent attachment of the two young persons was rather heightened than diminished by the comico-tragic situation into which they were thus transposed. Great tenderness prevailed throughout, and even their adversary was not treated bitterly, but only humorously. The book I did not make speak quite so politely; it expressed itself in this way, imitating an old rhyme.

Let arrogance speak out through him,
Me dangerous declaring;
The clumsy dunce that cannot swim,
At the water falls a swearing!

That Berlin pack of priestly fools,—
What care I how they brand me?
Let them learn to read in better schools,
Till they can understand me.

As I was prepared beforehand for everything that might be said of Werther, I found such a number of attacks no way troublesome. I had not, however, expected that I should suffer such an intolerable torment as I did from sympathizing, friendly souls. This happened as follows. Every one, instead of saying something complimentary to me about the book, just as it was, wished to know once for all, what was really true in it; at which I got very angry, and for the most part expressed myself in the most impolite way. In order to answer this question I should have had to take to pieces my work, on which I had thought so long, in order to give a poetic unity to so many elements, and so break up its form. In this process its essential parts would have been scattered and dissipated, if not destroyed. But when I considered it more carefully I could not take this demand of the public in ill part, Jerusalem's fate having excited great attention. A cultivated, estimable, blameless young man, the son of one of our first divines and writers, healthy and rich, suddenly, without known cause, destroyed himself. Every one asked how it was possible; when his unfortunate love-affair was made known the whole body of youth became especially interested, a feeling which was shared by the entire middle class as soon as the little vexations which he had experienced in aristocratic society were made public; every one wished for more minute information. At that moment there appeared in Werther a complete delineation, as it was thought, of the life and character of the above-named young man. The locality and the person suited the supposition, and with the great naturalness of the narrative, people thought themselves informed and satisfied. But, on close examination, there was much that did not answer to the facts, and so there arose for those who sought after the truth an intolerable employment, because a minute criticism necessarily excited a hundred doubts. The bottom of the matter could not be reached, for all that I had interwoven in the composition from my own life and sufferings was not to be deciphered

because my course had been that of an unnoticed young man, not secret but yet silent.

In my work I had not been ignorant how much that artist was favored to whom the opportunity had been given of composing a Venus from the study of many beauties. Accordingly I took leave to form my Lotte after the figures and peculiarities of several lovely children, though the features were taken from the dearest of them. Thus the search of the public could discover resemblances to many ladies, and to the ladies, too, it was not a matter of indifference whether they passed for the right one. These numerous Lottes caused me endless trouble, as every one who met me desired to know where the true one lived. I endeavored, like Nathan with the three rings, to escape by an evasion, with which, however, neither the credulous nor the reading public would be satisfied. I hoped, after a time, to be freed from such troublesome inquiries, but they accompanied me through my whole life. I sought, on journeys, to escape them by travelling incognito, but even this remedy was in vain, contrary to my expectation. The author of that little book, if he did in it anything wrong and hurtful, was thus punished for it sufficiently, or rather in excess by these inevitable importunities.

By this kind of infliction he learned but too well that authors and the public are separated by a great gulf, of which, happily, neither party has an idea. How useless all prefaces were for that reason, he had known for a long time. The more a writer intends to make his purpose clear, the greater confusion he gives occasion to. Besides, no matter how long a prologue an author makes, the public will always continue to make of him precisely the demands which he has endeavored to avoid. I also early became acquainted with a kindred peculiarity of readers, which strikes us quite comically, especially in those who print their opinions. They live in the delusion that in producing anything an author becomes their debtor, and that he always falls far behind what they wished and expected ; though shortly previous, when they had not yet seen the work, they had no sort of idea that any such thing was in existence, or possibly could be. But leaving all this aside, it was now the greatest fortune or misfortune that every one wished to make the acquaintance of this

singular young author, who had so unexpectedly and so boldly come upon the stage. They desired to see him, to speak to him, and even at a distance to hear something from him, and thus he had to live amidst a crowd of the most significant characters—which was sometimes delightful, sometimes uncomfortable, but which always distracted him. There lay before him works already commenced enough to have busied him for several years, if he could have kept himself to them with the old passion; but he was drawn forth from the quiet, the twilight, the obscurity which alone can favor pure creation, into the clamor of the daylight, where one is lost in others, where, by sympathy as well as by coldness, by praise, and by blame, he is led astray, because outward contact never coincides with the epoch of our inner culture, and therefore, as it cannot aid us, necessarily does us harm.

Still it was the impulse to dramatize every event in life of any importance that had happened to the society by which the author was surrounded, which, more than the dissipations of the day, kept him from the elaboration and completion of larger works. The exact meaning of this technical term (for such it was, in that creative circle) is here to be explained. Excited by spirited meetings, on the pleasantest days, we accustomed ourselves to divide into short extemporary performances the materials we had collected for the construction of larger compositions. A single simple conceit, a naive and lucky, or even a silly word, a misunderstanding, a paradox, an intelligent remark, personal peculiarities or habits, a significant look, and whatever happens in a various and glancing life, all were put into the form of a dialogue, a catechizing, a passing action, a play, often in prose, but more frequently in verse.

By this practice, which was carried through with genial passion, a strictly poetic mode of thought was established. We allowed objects, events, persons, to stand as they were in themselves and in all their relations, and only endeavored to apprehend them clearly, and to copy them vividly. Every criticism, whether favorable or unfavorable, had to be brought before the eyes of the beholder in living forms. These productions might be called epigrams, without edges or points, but richly furnished with

marked and striking features. The Fair-festival (*Jahrmarktsfest*) is such an epigram, or rather a collection of them. All the characters which there appear are meant for actual living members of that society, or for persons at least connected and in some degree acquainted with it. Still the meaning of the riddle remained concealed from the majority; all laughed, and few knew that their own most private peculiarities served for their amusement. The prologue to Bahrdr's *Newest Revelations* passed for an accompaniment of another kind; the smallest pieces are among the miscellaneous poems; many of them have been worn out and lost, and many others are not suitable for publication. Those which were printed, only increased the excitement of the public and the curiosity about the author; those which were handed about in manuscript enlivened the immediate circle to which they were communicated, a circle which was constantly increasing. Dr. Bahrdr, who then lived at Giessen, visited me with apparent politeness and confidence; he laughed at the prologue, and wished that we might be upon friendly terms. But we young people, nevertheless, attended no social party without enjoying a silent malicious pleasure in the peculiarities which we had noticed in others, and succeeded in copying.

It was now by no means disagreeable to the young author, to be stared at as a literary meteor. At the same time he sought with glad modesty to testify his respect for the most esteemed men of his native country, among whom the splendid JUSTUS MÖSER is to be mentioned before all others. The little essays of this incomparable man, on national subjects, had some years before been printed in the Osnaburg *Intelligenzblätter*, and brought to my notice by Herder, who overlooked no part of any work in his time, especially if it appeared in print. Möser's daughter, Frau von Voigt, was engaged in collecting these scattered papers. We could hardly wait for their publication, and I wrote to her with sincere interest, to assure her that the essays which were regarded as effective in only a limited circle, on account both of their subjects and their form, would everywhere be useful and profitable. Her father and herself received this expression from a stranger who was not wholly unknown, with great kindness, especially as a cause of anxiety on their part was removed by it.

These little essays which are all written with the same purpose, and make together a perfect whole, display an intimate knowledge of political matters as remarkable as it is honorable. We see a system resting upon the past, and still vigorous and living. On the one side a fast hold is kept of tradition, on the other, movement and change of things cannot be hindered. Here there is fear of a useful innovation, there we see joy and satisfaction with what is new, even if it should be useless or injurious. With what freedom from prejudice the writer explains the relationship of the different ranks in the state, as well as the connexion in which cities, towns, and villages, mutually stand ! We learn their prerogatives, together with the legal grounds of them. We are informed where the main capital of the state is invested, and what interest it brings in. We see the property of the country and its emoluments, and on the other hand the expenses and damages of various kinds, and then the most manifold profits ; in this also former and present times are contrasted.

Osnaburg, as a member of the Hanseatic League, had, as we find, in earlier periods an extensive and active commerce. For the uses of those times it had a remarkably beautiful situation ; it could receive the products of the country, and was not too far removed from the sea to trade with its own ships. But now, in more recent times, it lies far in the interior of the country ; by degrees it has become removed and shut out from the sea-trade. The manner in which this has taken place is described in many respects. The conflict of England with the cities of the coast, and of the latter with the middle country, is spoken of ; the great advantages of places upon the sea are set forth, and serious plans are proposed by which the inhabitants of the interior might also obtain the same. We also find a store of information concerning trades and handicrafts, and how large manufactories get the better of them, and shop-keepers and traders undermine them ; we see decline as the result of many different causes, and this result as the cause again of a new decline in an endless series, difficult to be broken. Still this clear-sighted citizen brings it out so distinctly, that we believe salvation from such a state of things still within our power. Everywhere the writer displays the profound-

est insight into the most minute circumstances. His advice, his plans, are in no wise drawn from the air, and yet they are often impracticable ; on account of this he himself called the collection "patriotic fancies," although everything in it is founded on facts, or on what is possible.

Since the whole public order rests on the institution of the family, his attention is especially turned to that. Changes in manners and customs, in dress, in diet, in domestic life, in education, are objects of grave as well as playful observation. To exhaust the subjects which he discusses, it would be necessary to go over everything in the political and moral world. But his treatment of them is admirable. An accomplished man of business addresses the people in weekly papers, for the purpose of bringing in its right aspect, whatever a wise and beneficent government proposes or performs, within the comprehension of every one. This is done, not in the manner of a teacher, but in the most various forms, which might be called poetic, and which must certainly be set down as rhetorical in the best sense of the word. He is always elevated above his subject, and understands how to give us a sunny view of the most serious things. Half-hidden, now behind this mask, and now behind that, now speaking in his own person, always completely exhausting the matter, and besides, always in good humor ; more or less ironical but everywhere strong, honest, well-meaning, and often vehement and intense ; and all these in just such proportions, that every one must wonder at the spirit, the understanding, the facility, the skill, the taste, and character of the writer. In judgment, in the choice of generally interesting subjects, in profound insight, free comprehension, felicitous treatment, humor as deep as it is genial, I can compare him with no one but Franklin.

With such qualities he commanded our boundless respect, and had the greatest influence upon a youthful generation which demanded something real, and stood ready to comprehend it. We thought we might make ourselves at home with the forms of his exposition, but who could hope to master so rich a table of contents, and to handle the most refractory subject with so much ease ?

It is still our fairest and sweetest delusion, and one which

we cannot resign, though it causes us much suffering through life, that we can in some manner appropriate, or even produce from ourselves, and exhibit as our own, that which we admire and revere in others. ●

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FOURTEENTH BOOK.

THE movement which now extended through the public was accompanied by another, of greater importance, perhaps, to the author, as it took place in his immediate vicinity. His earlier friends, who had previously been acquainted with the poems which were attracting so much attention, and for that reason regarded them as partly their own, triumphed at the success which they had boldly enough foretold. Their number was now increased by new adherents, and especially by such as were conscious of a creative power in themselves, which they wished to call forth and cherish.

Among these Lenz was foremost in activity and singularity. I have already described the exterior of this remarkable mortal, and touched with a loving hand on his talents and humor. I will now speak of his character, in its results rather than descriptively, because it would be impossible to follow him through the mazy course of his life and make a full exhibition of his peculiarities.

We have spoken of that self-torture which, in the lack of all outward impulses and necessities, had then got into fashion, and which attracted the very best minds. What disturbs but transiently those ordinary men who never observe themselves, what they seek to banish from their minds, was, by the more cultivated, carefully noticed, regarded, and preserved in books, letters, and diaries. In this crisis they joined the most strict moral requirements of themselves and others to the extremest negligence in action; and a notion arising from this half-self-knowledge misled them into the strangest habits and out-of-the-way practices. But in such a consummation of the observation and study of them-

selves they were supported by the rising empirical psychology which, if it did not declare everything that produces inward disquiet to be wicked and reprobate, still could not say a word in its justification, and thus was set on foot an eternal and inappeasable quarrel. In supplying this quarrel with materials, and in carrying it on, Lenz excelled all the other idlers and dabblers who were occupied in undermining their own souls. Thus, while he suffered from the universal tendency of the times, which was said to have been let loose by Werther, a personal peculiarity distinguished him from all the others, who were undeniably frank and honest creatures. He had a decided inclination to intrigue, and, indeed, to intrigue for its own sake. He engaged in it without having any special ends in view—reasonable, attainable, selfish ends. It was always his custom to propose to himself something whimsical, which served, for that very reason, to occupy him constantly. In this way he was all his life a villain in imagination; his love, as well as his hate, was fanciful; his thoughts and feelings he always dealt with in a wilful manner, so as always to have something to do. He endeavored to give reality to his attractions and repulsions by the most perverse means, and always himself destroyed his own work. Thus he never benefited any one whom he loved, and never injured any one whom he hated. In general he seemed to sin only to punish himself, and to intrigue for no purpose but to graft a new fable upon an old one.

His genius, in which tenderness, facility, and subtlety rivalled each other, came from a real depth, from an inexhaustible creative power, but with all its beauty it was sickly at every point. Such minds are the most difficult to judge of. In his compositions it cannot be denied that there are admirable features—a lovely tenderness steals along through pieces of nonsense so odd and silly that they can hardly be forgiven even to humor as perfect and unassuming, to as true a gift for the comic as his. His days were made up of mere nothings, to which his quickness could give a meaning. By a happy memory, which made the time he employed in reading always fruitful, and enriched his original thinking with various materials, he was enabled to waste away many hours.

He had been sent to Strasburg with some Livonian noblemen, for

whom a more unfortunate choice of a Mentor could not have been made. The elder baron went for a time back into his native country, and left behind him a lady to whom he was tenderly attached. In order to keep the second brother, who was paying court to the same lady, as well as other lovers at a distance, and to preserve the precious heart for his absent friend, Lenz determined either to feign that he had fallen in love with the beauty, or else actually to do so. He carried through this plan with the most obstinate adherence to the ideal he had formed of her, and would not be aware that he, as well as the others, only served her for jest and pastime. So much the better for him! For him, too, it was nothing but a game which could be prolonged by her meeting him in the same spirit, now attracting him, now repelling him, now calling him forward, and now putting him aside. People were sure that if he had come to a consciousness of the way the affair sometimes went on, he would have congratulated himself with great delight on the discovery.

As for the rest, he lived like his pupils mostly with officers of the garrison, which was probably the origin of the strange notions he afterwards brought out in his comedy of "The Soldiers." Meanwhile this early acquaintance with military men had the odd effect that he fancied himself a great judge of martial matters. In fact, he had by degrees so studied the subject in detail that some years afterward he prepared a long memorial to the French Minister of War, from which he promised himself the best results. The faults of the military establishment were tolerably well stated in it, but his remedies were ridiculous and impracticable. However, he stuck to the conviction that he should by this means gain great influence at court, and was anything but grateful to those of his friends who, partly by reasoning, and partly by active opposition, compelled him to keep back, and afterwards to burn, this fantastic work, which was already neatly copied, accompanied by a letter, enveloped, and formally addressed.

He had confided to me all the mazes of his movements hither and thither in relation to the lady above spoken of, at first orally and afterwards by letter. The poetry he infused into the most common things often astonished me, and I urged him to put the essence of this long-winded adventure to intellectual profit, and

to make a little romance out of it. But that was not in his line ; he could only succeed when he poured himself out upon some particular thing without limit, and spun an endless thread without any plan. Perhaps it may yet be possible, in some way or other, to put together an account of his life, in accordance with these hints, at least up to the time that he became a lunatic. At present I keep myself to the next subject that follows in order.

Hardly had Götz von Berlichingen appeared when Lenz sent me a prolix essay written on small copy-paper, such as he commonly used, without leaving the least margin, either at the top, the bottom, or the sides. It was entitled : " On our Marriage," and were it now at hand might enlighten us much more than it did me, for I was still in the dark as to him and his character. The leading purpose of this long manuscript was to compare my talents with his own : now he seemed to subordinate me to himself, and now to represent himself as my equal ; but it was all done with such humorous and neat turns of expression that I gladly received the view he intended to communicate, and all the more because, in fact, I prized very highly the gifts he actually possessed, and always urged him to concentrate himself out of that aimless fluctuation, and to use his innate capacities according to the rules of art. I replied in the most friendly way to his confidence, and as, in his pages, he had besought of me the most intimate relation (as the whimsical title indicates), from that time forward I imparted to him everything I had finished and that I designed. He, in return, gradually sent me his manuscripts ; *The Hofmeister*, the *New Menoza*, *The Soldiers*, *The Imitations of Plautus*, and the translation from the English which I have before spoken of as the supplement to his remarks on the theatre.

Among these, it struck me a good deal that in a laconic preface he declared that the contents of this essay, which was directed with vehemence against the regular stage, had many years before been read to a company of the friends of literature—thus at a time when Götz was not yet written. Among Lenz's acquaintances at Strasburg a literary circle of which I was ignorant seemed somewhat problematical. But I let it pass, and soon procured publishers for this and his other writings, without hav-

ing the least conception that he had selected me as the special object of his imaginary hatred, and as the mark of his adventurous and fanciful persecution.

In passing, I will, for the sake of the sequel, just mention a good fellow, who, though of no uncommon gifts, must be counted with the others. He was called Wagner, and was first a member of our Strasburg society and then of that at Frankfort—a man not without spirit, talent, and education. He was energetic and industrious, and so was welcome. He, too, held fast to me, and as I made no secret of my plans, I told him as well as others my design in Faust, especially the catastrophe of Gretchen. He caught up the subject and used it for a tragedy, “The Infanticide.” It was the first time that any one had stolen from me anything of my conceptions. It vexed me, though I should have borne him no ill will for it. I have since often enough suffered such robberies and anticipations of my thoughts. With my delays and habit of gossiping about so many things that I had laid out and imagined, I had no right to complain.

If orators and writers gladly make use of contrasts even at the expense of seeking them out and bringing them from a distance, on account of the great effect which they produce, it must be quite agreeable to the present writer to have a decided contrast offer itself to him, such as that between Lenz and KLINGER, whom I am now to speak of. They were of equal age, and in youth labored with and beside each other. But Lenz, as a transient meteor, passed but for a moment over the horizon of German literature, and suddenly vanished without leaving any trace behind. Klinger, on the other hand, an author of influence, and an active man of business, has maintained himself up to the present time. Of him I will now speak, as far as it is necessary, without following this comparison, which suggests itself, any further; for it has not been in secret that he has accomplished so much and exercised so great an influence. Both at home and at a distance he is still remembered with high esteem and appreciation.

Klinger’s exterior, for I always like best to begin with this, was very prepossessing. Nature had given him a tall, slender, well-built form, and a regular countenance. He was careful of

his appearance, always dressed neatly, and might have passed for the finest member of the society of *petits maitres*. His manners were neither forward nor distant, but mild, when not agitated by an inward storm.

In girls, we love what they are, but in young men what they promise, and thus I was Klinger's friend as soon as I made his acquaintance. He recommended himself by a pure good nature, and an undeniably decided character won him confidence. From youth up, he was inclined to earnestness. Besides a beautiful and gifted sister, he had to care for a mother, who in her widowhood had need of such children for her support. He had made himself everything that he was, so that no one could find fault with a trait of proud independence which appeared in his bearing. Decided natural aptitudes common to all well-endowed men, power of rapid comprehension, an excellent memory, and great fluency of speech, he possessed in a high degree ; but he appeared to regard all these as of less value than the firmness and perseverance which were innate with him, and which circumstances had abundantly strengthened.

To a young man of such a character, the works of Rousseau were especially adapted. Emile was his first and last book ; its ideas, which had a universal influence upon the cultivated world, were with him effective realities, and influenced him more than they did others. For he too was a child of nature, he too had made his way upwards. What others had been compelled to cast away, he had never possessed ; conditions from which they had been obliged to rescue themselves, had never confined him. Thus might he be regarded as one of the purest disciples of that gospel of nature, and in view of his own persevering efforts and his conduct as a man and son, he might exclaim, "All is good as it comes from the hands of nature !" But the conclusion, "All is corrupted in the hands of man !" was also forced upon him by adverse experience. It was not with himself that he had to struggle, but beyond and out of himself with the world of tradition from whose fetters the Citizen of Geneva designed to set us free. And as in the position of this young man the struggle was often difficult and painful, he was too powerfully driven back into himself to attain a thoroughly serene and joyous deve-

lopment. Instead of this, he frequently had to gain his point by contention and violence, from which a trait of bitterness was mingled in his character, which he afterwards in some degree cherished and supported, but for the most part strove against and conquered.

His works, as far as I am able to recall them, display a strong understanding, uprightness, activity of imagination, a happy perception of varieties of character, and a characteristic imitation of generic differences. His girls and boys are free and lovely, his youths ardent, his men plain and intelligent, the characters which he puts in an unfavorable light not too much exaggerated. He is not wanting in cheerfulness and good humor, in wit and lucky conceits ; allegories and symbols stand at his command ; he entertains and pleases us, but the enjoyment would be still purer if he did not here and there disturb for himself and us, his gay, pointed jesting by a touch of bitter ill-will. Yet this it is which makes him what he is. The modes of living and of writing are so manifold, from the fact that every one wavers hither and thither theoretically, between perception and deception, and practically between creation and destruction.

Klinger is one of those who form themselves for the world, out of themselves, out of their own souls and understandings. Because this takes place with and among a great mass, and because such men use with power and effect, an intelligible language flowing out of universal nature and the peculiar character of the people, they always cherish a warm hostility to all forms of the schools, especially if they chance to have been separated from their living origin, degraded into phrases, and thus totally deprived of their first, fresh significance. Such men declare against new opinions, views, and systems, as well as against new events and rising men of importance who announce or produce great alterations. This is, however, no reason for blaming them ; they see that to which they are indebted for their own existence and culture to be wholly in peril.

The perseverance of an energetic character becomes the more worthy of respect when it is maintained throughout a life in the world and in affairs, and when a mode of dealing with current events, which to many might seem rough and arbitrary, em-

ployed at the right time, leads most surely to its end. This was the case with him, as without pliability (which was never the virtue of the born citizen of the empire), but so much the more fitly, surely, and honorably, he raised himself to posts of importance where he knew how to keep his position, and whence he advanced himself with the approbation and favor of his highest patrons, but without ever forgetting his old friends, or the path he had left behind. Indeed, he sought pertinaciously to preserve the most complete constancy of remembrance through all degrees of absence and separation, and it certainly deserves to be remarked that he, like another Willigis, did not disdain to perpetuate in his coat of arms which was adorned by the badges of several orders, tokens of the first commencement of his career.

It was not long before I made the acquaintance of LAVATER. Passages of my "Letter of a Pastor to his Colleagues" had struck him greatly, for much of it agreed perfectly with his own ideas. With his ceaseless activity our correspondence soon became quite lively. He was just then making extensive preparations for his great work on Physiognomy,—the introduction to which had already been laid before the public. He called on all the world to send him drawings and outlines, but especially drawings of Christ ; and, although I could do as good as nothing in this way, he would have from me a sketch of the Saviour as I imagined him to look. Such demands of the impossible gave me occasion for jests of many kinds, and I had no other way of defending myself against his peculiarities but by bringing forward my own.

The number of those who had no faith in Physiognomy, or, at least, regarded it as uncertain and deceitful, was very great ; and several who had a high respect for Lavater felt a desire to try him, and, if possible, to play him a trick. He had ordered of a painter in Frankfort, who was not without talent, the profiles of several well known persons. The agent ventured upon the jest of sending Bahrdr's portrait at first instead of mine, in return for which there came back an epistle full of thunder, though quite lively, with all kinds of expletives and asseverations that this was not my picture,—together with everything else that on such an occasion Lavater might have to say in confirmation of the

doctrine of Physiognomy. My true likeness, which was sent afterwards, he allowed to pass more readily, but even then the opposition into which he used to fall with painters and with their subjects at once appeared. The former could never work for him with sufficient truth and precision, and the latter, whatever excellences they might have, were always too far behind the idea which he entertained of humanity and of men to prevent his being somewhat repelled by the special characteristics which constitute the personality of the individual.

The conception of Humanity which he had formed upon his own inward nature, was so completely akin to the living idea of Christ which he cherished within himself, that it was impossible for him to understand how a man could live and breathe without at the same time being a Christian. My own relation to the Christian religion lay merely in my understanding and sentiments, and I had not the least notion of that physical affinity to which Lavater inclined. I was, therefore, vexed by the importunity of a man so full of mind and heart,—an importunity with which he went at myself, as well as Mendelssohn and others. He maintained that every one must either become a Christian with him, a Christian of his sort, or else that each should bring him over to himself, and that his opponent should at once convince him of precisely that in which he (the opponent) had found peace. This demand, so directly opposed to that spirit of a liberal man of the world, to which I was more and more tending, did not have the best effect upon me. All unsuccessful attempts at conversion leave him who had been chosen for a proselyte stubborn and obdurate. This was my case when Lavater at last came out with the hard dilemma—"Either Christian or 'Atheist!'" Upon this I declared that if he would not leave me my Christianity such as I had hitherto cherished it, I could without difficulty decide for Atheism, especially as I saw that nobody knew precisely what either meant.

This writing backward and forward, as vehement as it was, did not disturb the good terms we were on. Lavater had an incredible patience, pertinacity, and endurance; he was confident of his opinions, and, with his determined plan to propagate his convictions in the world, he was willing to carry through by

waiting and mildness what he could not accomplish by means of power. Above all, he belonged to the few fortunate men whose outward vocation perfectly harmonizes with the inner one, and whose earliest culture steadily cohering with their subsequent pursuits, develops their faculties in accordance with nature. Born with the most delicate moral susceptibilities, he destined himself for a clergyman. He enjoyed the necessary instruction, and displayed various talents, but without inclining to that kind of development which is called learned. He also, though born so much earlier than I, had been seized upon by the spirit of Freedom and Nature which belonged to the time, and which whispered flatteringly in every ear, "You have materials and solid power enough within yourself, without much outward aid ; all depends upon your giving them a suitable unfolding." The duty of a clergyman to work upon men morally, in the sense of common life, and religiously in the higher sense, fully coincided with his mental tendencies. His most marked impulse, as a youth, was to impart to other men, and to excite in them, his own just and pious sentiments. His favorite occupation was the observation of himself and others. The former was made easy or rather necessary to him by an inward tenderness, the latter by a keen penetration. Still, he was not born for contemplation ; the gift of stating his ideas to others was, in its appropriate sense, not his. He felt himself rather, with all his powers, compelled to activity, to actuality ; and I have never known any one who was more uninterruptedly in action than he. But because our inward moral nature is incorporated in outward conditions, in that we belong to a family, a class, a guild, a city, or a state, he was under the necessity of coming in contact with all these external things, and, in so far as he desired to influence others, of setting them in motion. Hence arose many a collision, many an entanglement, especially as the commonwealth of which he was a native member enjoyed, under the most complete and precise limitations, an admirable ancient freedom. The republican, from his boyhood, accustoms himself to think and converse on public affairs. The youth sees himself in the first bloom of his days near the period when, as a freeman, he will have a vote to give and to withhold. If he wishes to judge justly and inde-

pendently, he must, first of all things, convince himself of the worth of his fellow citizens ; he must learn to know them ; he must inquire into their sentiments, their capacities ; and thus, in aiming to understand others, he is always brought home to his own bosom.

In such a condition Lavater was early trained, and this active life seems to have occupied him more than the study of languages and the analytic criticism, which is akin to that study, and is its foundation as well as its aim. In later years, when his knowledge and his views had attained a boundless comprehensiveness, he said frequently, both in jest and earnest, that he was not a learned man. It is to this very deficiency of thorough study, that we must ascribe the fact that he clung to the letter of the Bible, and even to its translation, and found in it sufficient nourishment, and assistance enough for what he sought and designed.

Very soon, however, this slow-moving circle of action, in which the member of a corporation or guild must work, became too narrow for the quick nature of its occupant. For a youth to be upright is not difficult, and a pure conscience revolts at the wrong of which it is still innocent. The oppressions of a bailiff (Landvogt) lay plain before the eyes of the citizens, but it was by no means easy to bring them to justice. Lavater joined a friend to himself, and both anonymously threatened the guilty man. The matter became notorious, and an investigation was rendered necessary. The criminal was punished, but the prompters of this act of justice were blamed if not abused. In a well ordered state even the Right must not be brought about in a wrong way.

On a journey which Lavater made through Germany, he came into contact with educated and reflecting men ; but that served only to confirm his previous ideas and convictions, and on returning home he worked from his own resources with greater freedom than ever. A noble and good man, he was conscious of a lofty conception of humanity. Whatever in experience contradicts such a conception, all the undeniable defects which lead every one away from perfection, he put out of sight by the idea of the Divinity which in the midst of the ages descended

into human nature in order completely to restore its earlier image.

So much at the outset concerning the tendencies of this eminent man ; and now first of all things, a bright picture of our meeting and personal intercourse. Our correspondence had not been long carried on, when he announced to me and to others, that in a journey along the Rhine which he was about to undertake he would soon visit Frankfort. At once a great public commotion arose ; all were curious to see so noteworthy a person ; many hoped to profit from him in the way of moral and religious culture ; the sceptics prepared to distinguish themselves by significant objections ; the conceited were sure of entangling and confounding him by arguments in which they had fixed themselves. There was also everything else designed and accidental, which awaits a distinguished man who intends to venture into this medley of a world.

Our first encounter was hearty ; we embraced each other in the most friendly way. I found him just as so many portraits had already shown him to me. I saw living and actually before me, an individual unlike any other, of such marked appearance as no one had seen before nor will see again. He, on the contrary, betrayed in the first moment, by some peculiar exclamations, that I did not seem as he had expected. Hereupon, I assured him, with the innate realism which I had cultivated, that as it had pleased God and nature to make me in that way we would be content with it. The most important points on which in our letters we had been furthest from agreeing, were at once the subjects of our conversation, but we had not time to discuss them thoroughly ; and so I saw something that I had never seen before.

Other men, whenever they wish to speak of affairs of the soul and of the heart, are wont to withdraw from the crowd, and even from all society, because in the many modes of thinking, and degrees of culture, it is difficult to be on a perfect understanding even with a few. But Lavater was of a wholly different turn ; he liked to extend his influence as far as possible, and was not at ease except in company, for the instruction and entertainment of which he possessed an especial talent, the foundation of which

was his great skill in physiognomy. He was gifted with an insight into persons and minds by which he quickly understood the state of all around him. If to the support of this there came a sincere confession, a true-hearted inquiry, he was able, from the great fulness of his internal and external experiences, to answer what was fitting to the satisfaction of every one. The deep tenderness of his glance, the harmonious sweetness of his lips, and even the honest Swiss dialect penetrating through his High German, with many other things that distinguished him, gave all to whom he spoke the most agreeable impressions. Even the slight bend which accompanied his rather hollow chest, contributed not a little to balance with the remainder of the company the superiority of his mere presence. Towards presumption and arrogance he knew how to demean himself with calmness and address, for while seeming to yield he would suddenly bring forward a grand view, on which his narrow opponent could never think, like a diamond shield, always so agreeably moderating the light which flowed from it, that such men felt themselves instructed and convinced, at least in his presence. Perhaps with many the impression continued to be influential, for even selfish men are at times as kindly as others ; it is only necessary by gentle influences to soften the hard shell which encloses the living kernel.

What caused him the greatest pain was the presence of those persons whose outward ugliness must irrevocably stamp them decided enemies of his theory as to the significance of forms. They generally employed a considerable knowledge of men, and even peculiar gifts and talents, in vehement hostility and mean carping for the destruction of a doctrine which appeared offensive to their self-love ; for it would not be easy to find any one so magnanimous as Socrates, who turned his faun-like exterior to the aid of the morality he had acquired. To Lavater the hardness, the obduracy of such antagonists was horrible, and his opposition was not without passion ; just as the fire of the furnace must attack the resisting ore as something troublesome and hostile.

In such a case a confidential conversation, such a one as would have related to ourselves, was not to be thought of. Though I was instructed by observing the manner in which he treated

men, I was not improved by it, for my position was wholly different from his. He that works morally loses none of his efforts, for there comes from them much more fruit than the parable of the Sower too moderately represents. But he whose labors are artistic, fails utterly in every work that is not recognised as a work of art. Now it is known how impatient my dear sympathizing readers were accustomed to make me, and for what reasons I had the greatest dislike to explain myself to them. At this time I felt but too vividly the difference between my own activity and that of Lavater. His was effective in his presence, mine in my absence. Every one that at a distance was dissatisfied with him became his friend the moment they met, and every one that from my works thought to make me an object of affection, found himself greatly deceived when he came in contact with a man of coldness and reserve.

Merk, who had at once come over from Darmstadt, played the part of Mephistopheles, and especially mocked at the crowd of women ; and as some of them attentively examined the apartments which had been vacated for the prophet, and, above all, his bed-chamber, the wag said that "the pious souls wished to see where they had laid the Lord." Nevertheless he had to let himself be exorcised as well as the others. Lips, who accompanied Lavater, drew his profile as completely and successfully as he did those of other men of importance, and of no importance, designed to be brought together in the great work on Physiognomy.

For myself, Lavater's society was highly instructive and of great worth. His pressing incitements to action brought my calm, artistic, contemplative nature into motion, not indeed to any advantage at the moment, because the dissipation which had already laid hold of me was thereby only increased. Still, so many things were talked about between us, that there rose in me the most earnest desire to prolong the discussion. Accordingly I determined to accompany him if he should go to Ems, so that, shut up in the carriage on the road and separated from the world, we might freely go over those subjects which lay on both our hearts.

Meanwhile the conversations between Lavater and Fräulein Von Klettenberg were to me exceedingly interesting and fruitful.

Here two decided Christians stood in contrast to each other, and it was quite plain to see how the same belief varies according to the intellectual tendencies of different persons. In those tolerant times it was often enough repeated that every man had his own religion and his own mode of worship. Although I did not declare this exactly, I could, in the present case, perceive that men and women need a different Saviour. Fräulein Von Klettenberg looked towards hers as to a lover to whom one yields everything without reserve, concentrating all joy and hope on him alone, and without doubt or hesitation confiding the destiny of life. Lavater, on the other hand, treated his as a friend, to be imitated lovingly and without envy, whose deserts he recognised and valued highly, and whom, for that very reason, he strove to copy and even to equal. What a difference between these two tendencies, which in general exhibit the spiritual necessities of the two sexes! Hence we may perhaps explain the fact that men of delicate natures have so often turned to the Mother of God as a paragon of womanly beauty and virtue, and like Sannazaro, have dedicated to her their lives and talents, a devotion sometimes varied by playing with the Divine Infant.

How my two friends stood to each other, and how they felt towards each other, I gathered not only from conversations at which I was present, but also from explanations which both made to me in private. I could not fully agree with either; for my own Christ had also taken form according to my idea. Because they would not allow him to pass at all, I teased them with all sorts of paradoxes and extreme expressions, and when they got impatient left them with a jest.

The contest between knowledge and faith was not yet the order of the day, but the two words and the ideas connected with them occasionally appeared, and the true haters of the world maintained that one was as little to be relied on as the other. Accordingly I took pleasure in declaring in favor of both, but without being able to gain the assent of my friends. In Faith, I said, everything depends on the fact of believing; what is believed is perfectly indifferent. Faith is a profound sense of security for the present and future, and this assurance springs from confidence in an immense, all-powerful, and inscrutable

Being. On the firmness of this faith all depends; but what we think of this Being depends on our own faculties, or even on circumstances, and is wholly indifferent. Faith is a holy urn into which every one stands ready to offer his feelings, his understanding, his imagination, as perfectly as he can. With knowledge it is exactly the opposite. The point is not at all whether we know, but what we know, how much we know, and how well we know it. Hence it comes that men contend about knowledge because it can be corrected, widened, and contracted. Knowledge begins with the particular, is endless and formless, can never be all comprehended, or at least only in dreams, and thus remains exactly the opposite of faith.

This kind of half truths, and the errors which arise from them, when poetically exhibited, may be exciting and entertaining, but in life they disturb and confuse conversation. For that reason I willingly left Lavater alone with all those who wished to be edified by him and through him, a deprivation for which I found myself satisfactorily compensated by the journey we made together to Ems. Beautiful summer weather attended us, and Lavater was gay and most charming. With the religious and moral, but in no way contracted direction of his mind, he was not unsympathizing when by the events of life those around him were excited to cheerfulness and gaiety. He joined in every sally, was spirited, witty, and liked the same in others, provided that they kept within the bounds which his delicate sense of propriety prescribed. If any one ventured beyond these he used to clap him on the shoulder, and call him back to good manners by a cordial "*Bisch guet!*" This journey afforded me instruction and inspiration of many kinds, which served in the knowledge of his character rather than in the government and culture of my own. At Ems I saw him once again surrounded by society of every sort, and I went back to Frankfort, because my little affairs were in such a state that I could scarcely be absent at all.

But I was not destined to return so speedily to repose. Basedow now came in, laid hold of me, and moved me in another direction. A more decided contrast could not be found than that between these two men. A single glance at Basedow showed

the difference. Lavater's features displayed themselves with openness to the observer, but those of Basedow seemed crowded together and drawn inward. Lavater's eye was clear and piercing, covered by very wide eyelids, Basedow's was deep in his head, small, black, sharp, gleaming from under bristly brows, while Lavater's frontal bone was edged with two arches of the softest brown hair. Basedow's strong, rough voice, his quick, sharp expressions, a kind of sarcastic laugh, his rapid change of subjects in conversation, and everything else peculiar to him, were all the opposite of the peculiarities and manners to which Lavater had accustomed us. Basedow was also much sought after in Frankfort, and his great talents admired, but he was not the man either to edify souls or to lead them. His special office was to give a better cultivation to the wide field he had marked out for himself, so that Humanity might afterwards erect its dwellings in it with greater ease and accordance with nature ; and to this end he hastened even too directly.

I could not altogether acquiesce in his plans, or even get a clear understanding of his views. I was of course pleased with the idea of making all instruction living and adapted to nature ; that the ancient languages should be practised, appeared to me laudable, and I gladly acknowledged what, in his conception, tended to the promotion of activity and a fresher view of the world. But I was displeased with the illustrations of his elementary work, which were even more incongruous than their subjects, for in the actual world, things stand together only as far as is possible, and for that reason, in spite of all variety and apparent confusion, the world has a regularity in all its parts. But this elementary work, on the contrary, sunders it completely, inasmuch as things which in the world never are combined, are put together on account of the relationship of ideas. By this means, also, the work fails of those advantages of a visible method which we must acknowledge in the similar labors of Amos Comenius.

But the conduct of Basedow was much stranger, and more difficult to comprehend than his doctrine. The purpose of his journey was, by personal influence, to interest the public in his philanthropic enterprise, and, indeed, he designed not only to

open hearts but purses. He had the power of speaking grandly and powerfully of his scheme, and every one willingly admitted what he declared. But in a most inexplicable way he pained the feelings of the very men whose assistance he wished to gain ; in fact he outraged them unnecessarily, through his inability to keep back his opinions and fancies on religious subjects. In this, too, Basedow was the very opposite of Lavater. While the latter received the Bible literally, and with its whole contents, as being word for word in force, and applicable down to the present day, the former had the most unquiet itching to make everything anew, and to remodel both the doctrines and the ceremonies of the church according to his own notions. He treated most unmercifully and imprudently those conceptions which come not immediately from the Bible, but from its interpretation, and those expressions, philosophic, technical words, or sensible figures with which the fathers of the church and the councils sought to explain for themselves the unspeakable, or to confute heretics. He declared himself before every one, and in a hard and unanswerable way, as the sworn enemy of the Trinity, and could never leave off arguing against this universally admitted mystery. I, too, had to suffer a good deal of this kind of entertainment in private conversation, and was compelled to have the *Hypostasis* and *Ousia*, as well as the *Prosopon*, brought before me again and again. Against this I resorted to the arms of Paradox, sailed even above the flight of his opinions, and ventured to oppose his rashest assertions with something rasher of my own. This gave a new excitement to my mind, and as Basedow was much more extensively read, and had more skill in the tricks of disputation than a naturalist like myself, I had always to exert myself the more, the more important the points discussed between us.

Such a splendid chance to exercise, if not to enlighten my mind, I could not allow to pass away in a hurry. I empowered my father and friends to transact the necessary business, and set off again from Frankfort in the company of Basedow. But what a difference was I aware of when I recalled the gentle spirit which breathed from Lavater ! Pure as he was, he created for himself a pure environment. One became like a maiden at his

side, in order not to touch him with anything contradictory to himself. Basedow, on the contrary, being far too much turned in upon himself, could not pay any attention to his exterior. His ceaseless smoking of wretched tobacco was of itself extremely disagreeable. In addition to this, as soon as his pipe was out, he brought forth a dirtily prepared kind of tinder, which took fire quickly, but had a most horrid stench, and every time poisoned the air with the first whiffs. I called this preparation "The Basedovian Smell-fungus," and declared that under this name it ought to be introduced into Natural History. This amused him greatly, and he explained the hated preparation minutely to my disgust, taking a malicious satisfaction in my aversion to it. It was one of the deeply rooted, disagreeable peculiarities of this admirably endowed man, that he liked to tease others, and could embarrass the most self-possessed person by his raillery. He could never see any one quiet, but he provoked him with mocking irony, put him into confusion by an unexpected question, and laughed bitterly when he gained his end, but was content when the object of his jests collected himself, and gave him something in return.

How much greater was now my longing for Lavater. He, too, seemed to be rejoiced when he saw me again, confided to me much that had happened, especially what related to the various characters of his fellow-guests, among whom he had already succeeded in making many friends and disciples. I myself found here many old acquaintances, and in those whom I had not seen for several years, I began to notice what in youth long remains concealed from us, namely, that men grow old and women change. The company became more numerous every day. There was immoderate dancing, and, as in the two great bath-houses, people came into pretty close contact, with perfect good acquaintance many sorts of jesting were carried on. Once I disguised myself as a village clergyman, and a well-known friend as his wife; by our excessive politeness, we were tolerably troublesome to the elegant society, and so put every one into good humor. Of serenades at evening, midnight and morning, there was no lack, and we juniors enjoyed but little sleep.

In contrast with these dissipations, I always passed a part of

the night with Basedow. He never went to bed, but dictated without cessation. Occasionally he cast himself on the couch and slumbered, while his amanuensis sat quietly pen in hand, all ready to continue his work when the half waking author should once again give free course to his thoughts. All this took place in a confined chamber, filled with the odor of tobacco and of his odious tinder. As often as I finished a dance, I hastened up to Basedow, who was ready at once to speak and dispute on any question, and when, after some time, I hurried again to the dance, he resumed the thread of his essay as quietly as if there were nothing else in the world.

We also made together many excursions into the neighborhood, saw the castles, and especially visited noble ladies, who were everywhere more inclined than the men, to receive intellectual and spiritual communications. At Nassau, at the house of Frau von Stein, we found a large company. Frau von Laroche was likewise present, and there was no lack of young ladies and children. Here they tried to lead Lavater into physiognomical temptation, which consisted mainly in seeking to make him take the accidents of development for the original form, but his eye was too sure to be deceived. I, too, was called on again and again to maintain the truth of the Sorrows of Werther, and to tell the residence of Charlotte, a desire which I declined to gratify, not in the most polite manner. In opposition to this, I collected the children around me to tell them very wonderful stories, all about well known things, in which I had the great advantage, that no member of my circle of hearers could ask me with any importunity what part was truth and what fiction.

Basedow affirmed that the only thing necessary was a better education of youth, and to this end he called upon the exalted and wealthy for considerable contributions. But hardly had his reasoning and his impassioned eloquence excited the sympathy of his auditors, if they had not converted them to his purpose, when the evil anti-trinitarian spirit seized upon him, so that without the least sense of where he was, he broke forth into the strangest discourses, which he thought religious in the highest degree, but which were in the highest degree offensive to the convictions of those around him. Lavater, by gentle seriousness,

I, by diverting jests, and the ladies by agreeable walks, all sought a remedy for this evil ; but harmony could not be restored. A Christian conversation which had been expected from the presence of Lavater, one on education from Basedow, and one on literature and sentiment, for which it was thought I should be ready, were at once disturbed and prevented. On our return home, Lavater reproached him, but I punished him in a humorous way. The weather was warm, and the tobacco-smoke had perhaps contributed to the dryness of his throat ; he was dying for a glass of beer, and seeing a tavern far ahead on the road, in a most thirsty tone he ordered the coachman to stop there. But just as he was driving up to the door, I called to him loudly and imperiously, "Go on !" Basedow, in astonishment, could hardly get the contrary command out of his husky voice. I urged the coachman more vehemently, and he obeyed me. Basedow cursed me, and was ready to fall on me with his fists, but I replied to him with the greatest composure, "Father, be quiet ! You ought rather to fall on your knees and thank me. Luckily you didn't see the beer-sign ! It was two triangles put together across each other. You commonly get mad at one triangle, and if you had got your eye on both of these we should have had to put you in a strait jacket." This joke threw him into immoderate laughter, which he mingled with scolding and cursing directed at me, while Lavater exercised his patience on both the young fool and the old one.

It was in the middle of July that Lavater got ready for his departure, and Basedow found it advantageous to join him. I had become so accustomed to this rare society that I could not bring myself to give it up. We had a delightful journey down the Lahn ; it was refreshing alike to heart and senses. At the sight of the ruins of an old castle, I wrote the song "High on the ancient Turret stands," in Lips's Album, and as it was well received, I wrote, after my evil habit, all kinds of doggerel rhymes and comicalities on the succeeding pages, in order to destroy its impression. I rejoiced to see the magnificent Rhine once more, and pleased myself with the astonishment of those who had never before enjoyed this splendid spectacle. We landed at Coblenz ; wherever we went, the crowd was very

great, and each of the three excited interest and curiosity. Basedow and I seemed to strive which could behave most outrageously. Lavater conducted himself rationally and with judgment, only he could not conceal his favorite opinions, and thus with the best designs he appeared extravagant to all men of mediocrity.

I have preserved the memory of a strange dinner at a hotel in Coblenz, in doggerel rhymes, which will, perhaps, stand with all their kindred in my New Edition. I sat between Lavater and Basedow; the first was instructing a country parson on the mysteries of the Revelation of John, and the other was in vain endeavoring to prove to an obstinate dancing master, that baptism was an obsolete usage not calculated for our times. As we were going on to Cologne, I wrote in an Album—

“ And, as towards Emmaus, with all their might
Hastening, you might have seen them;
The prophets talking on left and right,
While the world-child walks between them.”

Luckily this world-child had also a side which was turned towards the heavenly, and this was now moved in a way wholly peculiar. While in Ems I had rejoiced to hear that in Cologne we should find the brothers Jacobi, who with other eminent and attentive men had put themselves in the way of meeting our two remarkable travellers. On my part, I hoped for forgiveness from them for sundry little improprieties which had originated in the great love of mischief that Herder's keen humor had excited in us. The letters and poems in which Gleim and George Jacobi publicly rejoiced in each other, had given us opportunity for all sorts of sport, without our thinking that there was just as much self-conceit in giving pain to others when they are comfortable, as in showing an excess of kindness to oneself or to one's friends. By this means, a dissension had arisen between the Upper and Lower Rhine, of so slight importance, however, that mediation was possible,—a duty that women are particularly adapted to. Of these noble brothers, Sophia Laroche had already given us the best idea. Mademoiselle Fohlmer, who came to Frankfort from Düsseldorf, and who was intimate

in that circle, by the great tenderness of her sympathies, and the uncommon cultivation of her mind, furnished an evidence of the worth of the society in which she had grown up. She gradually put us to shame by her patience with our sharp High German manner, and taught us forbearance by letting us feel that we were ourselves in want of it. The true-heartedness of the younger sister of the Jacobis, the gaiety of the wife of Fritz Jacobi, turned our minds and eyes more and more to these regions. The latter was qualified to captivate me perfectly ; with no trace of sentimentality, and with a quick way of speaking, she was a splendid specimen of a Netherlands' woman. Without any expression of sensuality, her robust nature called to mind the women of Rubens. Both these ladies, in longer and shorter visits at Frankfort, had formed the closest alliance with my sister, and had expanded and enlivened the severe, stiff, and somewhat unfeeling nature of Cornelia. Thus Düsseldorf and Pempelfort had become, for our minds and hearts, a part of Frankfort.

Accordingly, our first meeting in Cologne was at once frank and confidential, for the good opinion of the ladies had not been without influence in our favor at home. I was not treated here, as before on the journey, as the mere misty tail of the two great comets, but those around paid me particular attention, and showed me abundant kindness, which they also seemed inclined to receive from me in return. I was weary of my previous follies and impertinences, behind which, in truth, I only hid my impatience, that on this journey there was so little to satisfy my heart and soul. Here, what was within me, burst out like a torrent, and this is perhaps the reason why I recollect so little of individual events. What we have thought of, the pictures we have seen, can be again called up in the understanding and imagination ; but the heart is not so complaisant ; it will not repeat its beautiful emotions, and least of all are we able to recall moments of enthusiasm ; they come upon us unprepared, and we yield to them unconsciously. For this reason, others, who at such times simply observe us, have a better and clearer insight into what passes within us, than we ourselves.

Religious conversations I had hitherto gently declined ; to plain questions, I had seldom returned proper answers, because

they seemed to me contracted in comparison with what I sought. When any one wished to force upon me his sentiments and opinions concerning my own productions, but especially when I was afflicted with the demands of everyday good sense, and people told me decidedly what I ought to have done, and what not, I got out of patience, and the conversation broke off, or crumbled to pieces, so that no one could part from me with a particular good opinion of me. It would have been much more natural to make myself gentle and friendly, but my feelings would not be school-mastered. They needed to be so expanded by free good will and sincere sympathy as to surrender altogether. One feeling which prevailed greatly with me, and could not find an expression, odd enough, was the sense of the past and present together in one ; a phenomenon that brought into the present something spectral. It is expressed in many of my smaller and larger poems, and in them always has a beneficial influence, though at the moment when it came out in life, it must have appeared to every one strange, inexplicable, perhaps gloomy.

Cologne was the place where antiquity had such an incalculable effect upon me. The ruins of the Cathedral (for an unfinished work is like one destroyed) called up again the emotions to which I had been accustomed at Strasburg. Artistic considerations were out of the question ; both too much and too little were given me ; and there was no one who could help me out of the labyrinth of what was performed and what was proposed, of the fact and the plan, of what was built up and what was only intimated, as nowadays, our industrious and persevering friends are ready to do. With others I admired the halls and columns, but when alone I always sadly lost myself in this world-edifice, thus checked in its creation while far from complete. Here, too, was an immense thought not put into execution. It appears, indeed, as if the architecture were there only to convince us that by many men, in a series of years, nothing can be accomplished, and that in art and in deeds only that is achieved which, like Minerva, springs full-grown and armed from the head in which it originated.

At these moments, which oppressed more than they cheered my heart, I did not suppose that the tenderest and fairest feeling

was waiting for me so near at hand. They carried me into Jappach's house where what I had been wont to form for myself inwardly came actually and sensibly before my eyes. This family had probably died out long ago, but on the ground floor which opened upon a garden, we found everything unchanged. A pavement neatly adorned with brownish red tiles, high carved chairs with embroidered seats and backs, table-tops curiously inlaid, on heavy feet, metal chandeliers, an immense fire place and the appropriate utensils, everything in harmony with those early times, and in the whole room nothing new, nothing connected with to-day but ourselves. But what more than all, increased and completed the sensation which the scene strangely excited, was a large family picture above the fire-place. There sat the former wealthy inhabitant of this abode with his wife, surrounded by children; all present, fresh and living, as if of yesterday, or rather of to-day, and yet all of them had passed away. These young, round-cheeked children had grown old, and without this ingenious imitation, not a trace of them would have remained. How I acted, how I bore myself, when overcome by these impressions I could not say. The deepest bottom of my human affections and poetic capabilities was revealed in the boundless stirring of my heart; all that was good and loving in the soul within me, seemed to open and put forth. From that moment without further probation or debate, I was made a partner for life, in the affection and confidence of those excellent men.

As a result of this union of soul and intellect, in which all that was living in each came forth upon his lips, I offered to recite my newest and most favorite ballads. "The king of Thule," and "There was a rascal bold enough," had a good effect, and I brought them forth with more feeling for the reason that my poems were still bound to my heart, and seldom passed over my lips. I was easily hindered, by the presence of certain persons, to whom my too tender sensibility might perhaps be offensive; frequently, in the midst of a recitation, I became confused and could not get right again. How often for that reason have I been accused of wilfulness, and of a strange, whimsical caprice!

Although poetic composition, just then, mainly occupied me and exactly suited my natural turn of mind, I was still no stranger

to reflection on all kinds of subjects, and Jacobi's original tendency to dwell on the unfathomable was most welcome and agreeable to me. Here no controversy arose, neither a Christian one, as with Lavater, nor a didactic one, as with Basedow. The thoughts which Jacobi imparted to me flowed immediately from his heart. How was I penetrated as in unlimited confidence, he did not conceal from me the profoundest demands of his soul. From so amazing a combination of necessity, passion, and ideas, I could only gather presentiments of what might, perhaps, afterwards grow more clear to me. Happily, I had already cultivated, if not fully developed, myself on this side, and had half appropriated the existence and thought of an extraordinary man, incompletely indeed and hastily, but I was already conscious of important influences derived from it. This mind, which worked upon me so decisively and which was destined to affect so deeply my whole mode of thinking, was SPINOZA. After looking through the world in vain, to find a means of development for my strange nature, I at last fell upon the Ethics of this man. Of what I read out of the work, and of what I read into it, I can give no account. Enough that here I found a sedative for my passions, and that a free, wide view over the material world, seemed to open before me. But what especially bound me to him, was the great disinterestedness which shone from every sentence. 'That wonderful expression, "Who loves God truly must not desire God to love him in return," with all the preliminary propositions on which it rests, and all the consequences that follow from it, filled my whole mind. To be disinterested in everything, but the most so in love and friendship, was my highest desire, my maxim, my practice, and so that hasty saying of mine afterwards, "If I love thee what is that to thee?" was spoken right out of my heart. Moreover, it must not here be denied that the most inward unions are those of opposites. The all-composing calmness of Spinoza was in striking contrast with my all-disturbing activity, his mathematical method was the opposite of my poetic imagination and way of writing, and the very precision which was thought not adapted to moral subjects, made me his enthusiastic disciple, his most decided worshipper. Mind and heart, understanding and fancy, sought each other with an eager affinity, binding together the most different natures.

At that time all was fermenting and seething in the first action and reaction. Fritz Jacobi, the first whom I suffered to look into the chaos, and whose nature was also toiling in the lowest deeps, received my confidence, heartily responded to it, and endeavored to lead me to his own opinions. He, too, felt an unspeakable spiritual want, and he, too, did not wish to have it appeased by outward aid, but aimed at development and illumination from himself. I could not comprehend what he communicated to me of the state of his mind, and so much the less because I could form no idea as to my own. Still, as he was far in advance of me in philosophic thought, and even in the study of Spinoza, he endeavored to guide and enlighten my obscure striving. Such a purely intellectual relationship was new to me, and excited a passionate longing for further communion. At night, after we had parted and had gone into our own chambers, I sought him yet again. The moonlight trembled over the broad Rhine, and we, standing at the window, revelled in the fullness of mutual giving which in that splendid time of development is so rich and abundant.

Still, of the unspeakable joy of those moments I can now say nothing more definite. Much more distinct remains in my mind an excursion to the hunting-seat of Bensberg, which, lying on the right shore of the Rhine, enjoyed the most splendid prospect. What delighted me beyond measure was the decorations of the walls by Weenix. All the animals that the chase can furnish lay around in skilful arrangement, as if on the base of a large hall surrounded by pillars ; over them we saw a wide landscape. The extraordinary artist had expended his whole power in giving life to these lifeless creatures ; in the representation of the most various coverings of animals, the bristles, hair, feathers, antlers, claws, he equalled nature, while, in effect, he had exceeded her. When we had admired these works of art sufficiently, as a whole, we were compelled to reflect on the handling by which such pictures, combining so much spirit and mechanical skill, were produced. We could not understand how they could be created by human hands, or by means of what instruments. The pencil was not sufficient ; peculiar preparations must be supposed to make such various effects possible. We came close to them,

or withdrew to a distance, with equal astonishment ; the cause was as wonderful as the effect.

Our further journey down the Rhine was happy and fortunate. The widening of the river invites the mind to a like expansion, and to a broader view. We arrived at Düsseldorf, and from there at Pempelfort, a most delightful and beautiful stopping-place, where a spacious house, opening upon extensive and well-kept gardens, collected together a thoughtful and refined circle. The members of the family were numerous, and strangers, who found abundant enjoyment in so rich and agreeable an environment, were never wanting.

In the Düsseldorf gallery my partiality for the Flemish school found plentiful nourishment. There were whole halls filled with these vigorous, sturdy pictures, shining with their hearty fulness of nature ; and, if my insight was not enlarged, my store of knowledge was enriched and my passion confirmed.

The beautiful composure, satisfaction, and constancy, which marked the leading character of this family circle, soon appeared in all their power before the eyes of the guests, who could not fail to perceive that a broad sphere of influences had here its centre, reaching in its operation to many other places. The activity and opulence of the neighboring cities and villages contributed not a little to enhance the feeling of inward contentment. We visited Elberfeld, and were delighted with the busy aspect of so many well arranged manufactories. Here we found again our friend Jung, commonly known as Stilling, who had already come to meet us at Coblenz ; and who, in faith in God and truth towards men, had always the most precious attendants. Here we saw him at home, and took pleasure in the confidence reposed in him by his fellow citizens, who, though occupied in earthly gain, did not leave the heavenly treasures out of view. The sight of this industrious region was satisfactory, because the useful was the product of order and neatness. In the enjoyment of these things we passed happy days.

When I returned to my friend Jacobi, I enjoyed the rapturous feeling springing from a union of the innermost soul. We were both inspired by the common effect of the liveliest hope, and I urged him pressingly to put, with power, into some

permanent form all that was acting and moving in him. This was the means by which I had escaped from so many perplexities, and I hoped that it would relieve him also. He did not delay. He undertook the task with zeal, and how much that was good, and beautiful, and consoling, he accomplished ! And so, at last, we parted with the happy sense of eternal union, and wholly without a presentiment that our labors would assume opposite directions, as, in the course of life, was but too plainly revealed.

What besides occurred to me in the return up the Rhine has altogether vanished from my memory, partly because the second sight of natural objects is wont, in, my thoughts, to be mingled with the first ; and partly because, with my attention turned inwardly, I was endeavoring to arrange the various and extensive experience I had gained, and to work up what had affected me. Of an important result, which for a long time occupied me intensely and impelled me to creative efforts, I will now speak.

With my lawless disposition, and a life and action so aimless and purposeless, it could not remain hidden from me that Lavater and Basedow employed intellectual and even spiritual means for earthly ends. It soon struck me, who spent my talents and my days for no object, that both of these men, while endeavoring, each in his own way, to preach their doctrines, to teach and to convince, had certain views in the background—the advancement of which was, to them, of the greatest consequence. Lavater went gently and prudently, Basedow vehemently, rudely, and even awkwardly, to work ; but both were so convinced of the excellence of their favorite schemes and undertakings, and their mode of prosecuting them, that all were compelled to esteem them as men of sincerity, to love and to honor them. In praise of Lavater especially, it could be said that he actually had higher objects, and, if he acted according to the wisdom of this world, it could well be believed that the end hallowed the means. As I observed them both, and indeed frankly told them my opinion and received theirs in return, the thought arose in me that the man of eminent character must desire to scatter around him what is divine within him. Then he comes in contact with the rough world, and, in order to act upon it, he must put himself on the same level. Thus, he in a great measure renounces those

lofty excellences, and finally yields himself wholly to the world. The heavenly, the eternal, is buried in a body of earthly designs, and hurried with it to the fate of the transient and perishable. From this point of view I now regarded the career of these two men, and it seemed to me, in each case as worthy of honor as it was a cause of regret ; for I thought I could foresee that each might be compelled to sacrifice the higher to the lower. As I was pursuing my observations of this kind to the furthest extremity, and looking beyond the limits of my narrow experience for similar cases in history, the plan grew up in me to make in the life of Mahomet, whom I had never been able to think an impostor, a dramatic presentation of those courses which, in actual life, I had so vivid a perception of as leading to ruin much more than to good. I had shortly before read and studied the life of the Eastern Prophet with great interest, and so was tolerably prepared when the idea occurred to me. The whole approached more to the regular form to which I was again inclining, although I still used in moderation the liberty gained from the stage, of arranging time and place according to my own pleasure. The piece began with a hymn which Mahomet sings alone under the open sky. First, he adores the innumerable stars as so many gods ; then rises the friendly star, Gad (our Jupiter), and to him, as the king of the stars, new adoration is offered. Soon the moon rises and wins the eye and heart of the worshipper, who next, greatly refreshed and strengthened, is summoned to new praise by the ascending sun. But these changes, however delightful, are still unsatisfactory and the mind feels that it must rise yet above itself ; it rises to God, the Only, Eternal, Infinite, to whom all these splendid yet limited creatures owe their existence. I composed this hymn with great enthusiasm ; it is lost, but might easily be restored for the purpose of a cantata, and would commend itself to the musical composer by the variety of its expression. It would, however, be necessary to imagine, as was then the design, the conductor of a caravan with his family and whole tribe, and so the alternation of the voices, and the strength of the choruses, would be provided for.

After, in this way, Mahomet had converted himself, he imparts these feelings and ideas to his friends. His wife and Ali become

his disciples without reserve. In the second act, he attempts, and Ali with still greater ardor than he, to propagate this faith in the tribe. Assent and opposition appear according to the variety of characters. The feud begins, the strife becomes violent, and Mahomet is compelled to flee. In the third act, he overcomes his adversaries, makes his religion the public one, and purifies the Kaaba from idols ; but, as all this cannot be done by power, he is obliged to resort to cunning. The earthly increases and extends itself, the divine retires and is obscured. In the fourth act, Mahomet pursues his conquests, and his doctrine becomes a pretence rather than an end ; all conceivable means must be employed, and barbarities become abundant. A woman, whose husband has been put to death by his order, poisons him. In the fifth act, he feels that he is poisoned. His great calmness, the return to himself, to a higher life, make him worthy of admiration. He purifies his doctrine, establishes his kingdom, and dies.

Such was the sketch of a work on which I was for a long period mentally engaged, for usually I had to collect and arrange the materials before I even commenced the execution. I meant, in it, to represent the whole power of genius over men by means of character and intellect, and what are its gains and losses in the process. Several songs which were to be inserted, were composed beforehand ; all that remains of them is what stands among my poems under the title, "Mahomet's Song." This was to be sung by Ali in honor of his master, at the highest point of success, just before the alteration in affairs resulting from the poison. I recollect also the designs of several passages, but the explanation of them here would lead us too far.

B O O K F I F T E E N T H .

FIFTEENTH BOOK.

FROM these manifold dissipations, which, however, generally gave occasion for serious, and even religious reflections, I always returned to my noble friend, Fräulein von Klettenberg. Her presence calmed, at least for a moment, the stormy impulses and passions that struggled forth in all directions. With her, too, next to my sister, I liked best to discuss such designs as that I have just spoken of. I might, indeed, have perceived that her health was constantly failing, but I concealed it from myself, and with the more ease as her cheerfulness increased with her illness. She used to sit, dressed with taste and neatness, in her chair at the window, and kindly listen to the narratives of my little expeditions as well as to what I read aloud to her. Often, too, I made sketches, in order more easily to describe to her the places I had seen. One evening, just after I had been recalling to my mind many different scenes and images, as the sun was setting, she and all around her appeared as if transfigured, and I could not refrain from making a drawing of her person and the objects in the chamber, as well as my incapacity permitted. In the hands of a skilful artist like Kersting it would have been most beautiful. I sent it to a fair friend at a distance, and added the following lines as commentary and supplement :

In this magic mirror clearly
Lo a dream, how calm, how blest !
Where the friend, whom God loves dearly,
Suffering 'neath His wing doth rest.

Mark how her endeavors bear her
Out of life's waves to yonder shore ;
And see, with thine own image near her,
The God that for you sorrowed sore.

Feel, too, what I, in the waving
Of that heavenly ether, knew,
As, with quick, impatient striving,
My rapturous hand these outlines drew.

Though in these verses, as often happened on other occasions, I expressed myself as an alien, a stranger, a heathen even, this was not repugnant to her. On the contrary, she assured me that she liked me as well as before, when I used the Christian terminology, which I could never apply quite correctly. Indeed, it was already a standing affair, when I read aloud to her missionary intelligence, which she was always very fond of hearing, for me to take the part of the Pagans against the missionaries, and to prefer their old condition to their new one. But she was ever gentle and friendly, and seemed to be not in the least anxious about me or my salvation.

My gradual withdrawal from her creed arose from the fact that I had endeavored to lay hold of it with too great zeal, with passionate love. Since I had come so near the Moravians, my inclination to the company united under the victorious banners of Christ had constantly increased. Every positive religion has the greatest attraction when it is thought of in the period of its formation. On that account it is delightful to go back to the time of the Apostles, where all stands forth as fresh and immediately spiritual. The Moravian doctrine had something magical in that it appeared to continue or rather to perpetuate the condition of those first times. It connected its origin with them, and had never perished, but had only wound its way through the world by unnoticed shoots and tendrils, until a single germ took root under the protection of a pious and eminent man, once more, from imperceptible and apparently accidental beginnings, to expand wide over the world. In this, the most important point, was the inseparable combination of religious and civil matters, by which the teacher was at the same time the ruler, and the father held the authority of the judge. Besides this, the religious head, to whom unlimited faith was yielded in spiritual things, was also intrusted with the guidance of temporal affairs, and his responses through the decision of the lot as to what should direct the government in general, as well as each individual, were received with submis-

sion. The beautiful calmness to which at least outward appearances testified, was most alluring, while, on the other side, all the power of action in man was called for by the missionary vocation. The superior men whose acquaintance I made at Marionborn, where Councillor Moritz, the agent of Count von Isenburg, took me with him, had gained my whole respect, and it only needed their efforts to make me their own. I employed myself with the study of their history, of their doctrine, its origin and growth, and soon was able to explain it and to converse about it with those who were interested in it. Nevertheless, I was obliged to perceive that the brethren would not allow me to pass for a Christian any more than did Fräulein von Klettenberg. At first this disturbed me, but afterwards my inclination to them became somewhat cooler. But I could not for a long time discover the precise ground of difference, although it was plain enough to see. Finally it came upon me more by accident than through any investigation. What separated me from the brotherhood, as well as from other good Christian souls, was the very point on which the Church has more than once fallen into dissension. One part maintained that by the Fall human nature was so far corrupted that, to its innermost core, not the least good could be found in it, for which reason man must give up all trust in his own powers, and look to grace and its influence for everything. The other party very readily admitted the hereditary imperfections of men, but attributed to nature a certain inward germ, which, when animated by divine grace, was capable of growing up to a joyous tree of spiritual happiness. By this conviction I was possessed to my inmost soul without knowing it myself, although with tongue and pen I had taken the opposite side. But I went on in such obscurity that I had never once clearly stated the dilemma to myself. From this dream I was quite unexpectedly roused as one day in a religious conversation I expressed this opinion, to my mind a most innocent one, with perfect distinctness, and in return underwent a severe admonition. This very thing, it was maintained against me, was genuine Pelagianism, a corrupting doctrine which was again appearing, to the great injury of modern times. At this I was astonished and terrified. I went back to Church history, studied the doctrine and fate of Pelagius more

closely, and saw clearly how these two irreconcilable opinions had fluctuated hither and thither, and through centuries had been embraced and acknowledged by men as they were of a more active or passive nature.

The course of the past years had incessantly led me to the exercise of my own powers. A restless activity was at work within me, with the best desire for moral development. The world without demanded that this activity should be regulated and employed for the advantage of others, and this great demand I had to put into deeds in myself. On all sides I had been pointed to nature, and she had appeared to me in her whole magnificence; I had learned to know many good and true men who were toiling in their duty, and for the sake of their duty: to renounce them, or to renounce myself, seemed impossible. The gulf which separated me from the doctrine of total depravity became plain to me, and so I had to part from this society of my religious friends. As my love of the holy Scriptures, as well as of the founder of Christianity and the early confessors, could not be taken from me, I formed a Christianity for my private use, and sought to establish and build it up by industrious study of history and careful observation of those who had inclined to my opinion.

As everything which I received into my mind with passion at once put on a poetic form, I now took up the strange idea of treating epically the history of the Wandering Jew, which popular books had long before impressed upon me. My design was, in the course of the narrative, to bring out the prominent points of the history of religion and the Church as I should find it convenient. I will now explain the way in which I regarded this fable, and what significance I put upon it.

In Jerusalem there was a shoemaker, to whom the legend gives the name of Ahasuerus. For this character my Dresden shoemaker afforded the main features. I had furnished him with the spirit and humor of a craftsman, of Hans Sachs, and ennobled him by an inclination to Christ. As, in his open workshop, he liked to talk with the passers-by, jested with them, and, after the Socratic fashion, touched up every one in his own way, the neighbors and others of the people took pleasure in lingering at his booth; even

Pharisees and Sadducees spoke to him, and the Saviour himself and his disciples would often stop within his door. The shoemaker, whose thoughts were directed solely upon the world, took a special attraction to our Lord, which, for the most part, was expressed by a desire to bring this lofty man, whose mind he did not comprehend, over to his own way of thinking and acting. Accordingly, in a modest manner, he urged Christ to come forth out of his speculations, not to go about the country with such idlers, and not to draw the people away from their labor with him into the wilderness. An assembled people, he said, was always an excited one, and nothing good could come of it.

In return, the Lord endeavored, by symbols, to instruct him in his higher views and aims, but these could not profit the sturdy fellow. Thus, as Christ became more and more important, and finally a public person, the friendly workman declared his opinion more and more sharply and vehemently, maintaining that disturbances and tumults would follow from such a course, and that Christ would be compelled to declare himself as the head of a party, though that could not possibly be his design. Finally, when things took the course which history narrates, and Christ was seized and condemned, Ahasuerus was yet more violently provoked, as Judas, who had apparently betrayed his Lord, came in despair into the workshop, and with lamentations related his unfortunate deed. He was, in fact, as well as the shrewdest of the other disciples, firmly convinced that Christ would declare himself regent and head of the nation. He had merely desired to compel the Lord, whose delay to do this had hitherto been unconquerable, by violence to the deed. Accordingly, he had incited the priesthood to acts which previously they had not dared to do. The disciples, on their side, were not without arms, and probably all would have turned out well, if the Lord had not given himself up, and left them in the most forlorn state. Ahasuerus, whom this narrative does not at all incline to mildness, makes still more painful the condition of the poor ex-apostle, so that nothing remains for him but to hasten away and hang himself.

As Jesus was led past the workshop of the shoemaker, on his way to death, the well-known scene there took place. The sufferer fainted under the burden of the cross, and Simon of Cyrene was

compelled to carry it along. Here Ahasuerus came forward, like those men of sharp intellect, who, when they see any one in misfortune through his own fault, feel no pity, but, impelled by an untimely sense of justice, make the matter worse by reproaches. In this way he comes out and repeats all his former warnings, changing them into vehement accusations, which his attachment to the sufferer seemed to give him a right to do. The Saviour does not answer, but at the instant the loving Veronica covers his face with the napkin, and as she removes it and raises it aloft, Ahasuerus perceives depicted on it the features of the Lord, not those of the sufferer of the moment, but transfigured and radiant with celestial life. Blinded by this appearance, he turns away his eyes and hears the words: "Thou shalt wander over the earth till thou seest me in this form once more." After some time, the overwhelmed artisan comes to himself; he finds that every one has gone to the place of execution; the streets of Jerusalem are empty; disquiet and longing drive him forth, and he begins his wandering.

I shall, perhaps, speak elsewhere of all this, and of the event by which the poem was ended indeed, but not finished. The beginning, scattered passages, and the conclusion, were written. But I did not bring them together. I lacked time for the studies necessary to give it the character and scope that I wished. The few sheets which I did compose were also more readily left to repose, as an epoch was developed in me, which necessarily arose after I wrote Werther, and saw the effects it produced.

The common fate of man, which all of us have to bear, must fall most heavily on those whose intellectual powers have early a wide expansion. We may grow up under the protection of parents and relatives. We may lean upon our brothers and sisters and our friends, be supported by acquaintances, and made happy by those we love, but the end always is that we are directed back to ourselves. It seems as if the Divinity had taken such a position towards men as not to be able to respond to their reverence, trust, and love, at least not in the precise moment of need. Early enough I learned, through many lessons, that at crises of greatest necessity the call to us is, "Physician, heal thyself;" and how frequently had I been compelled to sigh out

in pain, "I tread the wine-press alone!" As I was now looking about for the means of establishing my independence, I found that the surest basis for it was my creative talent. For many years this had never failed me for a moment; what I saw by day, often shaped itself into regular dreams at night, and when I awoke there appeared to me either a wonderful new whole, or a part of something already commenced. Usually I despatched my writing in the first part of the day; but nevertheless at evening, or late at night, when wine and social intercourse had raised my spirits, I was ready for whatever was desired; all that was wanting was an occasion, a subject of any character. I was prepared and ready. As I reflected upon this natural gift, and found that it belonged to me as my own, that it could neither be favored nor hindered by anything foreign to me, I easily built my whole existence in thought upon it. As this conception assumed a distinct form, the old mythological image of Prometheus occurred to me, who, separated from the gods, peopled a world from his own work-shop. I felt most clearly that any creation of importance could only take place when its author isolated himself. My things which had received so much applause were children of solitude, and since I had stood in a wider relation to the world, I had not wanted the power or the pleasure of invention, but the execution halted because I had, both in prose and in verse, no style that could be called properly my own, and at every new work, after the materials were elaborated, I had always to begin at the beginning and try experiments. As in this I had to decline the aid of men, or rather to exclude it, so, in the fashion of Prometheus, I separated myself from the gods also, and so much the more naturally as with my character and mode of thinking one tendency always swallowed up and repelled all others.

The fable became living in me. The old Titan web I cut up according to my own dimensions, and without further reflection began to write a piece in which I represented the difficulty which arose between Prometheus and Jupiter and the later gods, on occasion of his making men with his own hand, giving them life by the aid of Minerva, and founding a third dynasty. And, in fact, the reigning gods had just cause to be aggrieved, since

they might now appear as beings interpolated between the Titans and men. In this singular composition belongs as a monologue that poem, which has become of so much importance in German literature, by having served as the occasion for Lessing to come out against Jacobi as to weighty matters of thought and feeling. It was thus the match of an explosion which revealed and brought into discussion the most private relations of men of worth ; relations which they were perhaps not conscious of, and which were slumbering in a society otherwise most enlightened. The schism was so violent, that, with the addition of some accidents, it caused us the loss of one of our most valuable men, namely, Mendelssohn.

Although philosophical and even religious considerations may be attached to this story, still it belongs peculiarly to poetry. The Titans are the foil of polytheism, as the devil can be considered the foil of monotheism, though, like the only God to whom he stands in contrast, the latter is not a poetic figure. The Satan of Milton, though boldly enough drawn, still remains in the disadvantageous position of a subaltern attempting to destroy the splendid creation of a higher being ; but Prometheus, on the contrary, stands forth as one who, in spite of superior beings, has the power of acting and creating. It is also a more beautiful thought, and more adapted to poetry, that men should be created not by the Supreme Ruler of the world, but by an intermediate agent, who, as a descendant of the most ancient dynasty, is of worth and importance enough to perform this office. So, in every aspect, the Grecian mythology contains an inexhaustible wealth of divine and human symbols.

Nevertheless, the Titanic, gigantic spirit heaven-storming, afforded no material for my poetic art. I preferred to represent that peaceful, plastic, and always patient opposition which recognises the superior power, but presumes to take an equal position. The bolder persons of the race, Tantalus, Ixion, Sisyphus, were my saints. Received into the society of the gods, they would not deport themselves submissively enough, and aroused the anger of their host and patron, and drew down upon themselves a sorrowful banishment. I pitied them ; their condition had already been set forth by the ancients as truly

tragic, and as I brought them forward in the back ground of my *Iphigenie*, I am indebted to them for a part of the effect which the piece had the fortune to produce.

At that time poetic compositions and designing were, with me, constant companions. I drew the portraits of my friends in profile on grey paper, with white and black crayons. When I dictated or listened to reading, I sketched the positions of the writer and reader, with their environment; the resemblance could not be denied, and the drawings were well received. Dilettanti always have this advantage because they give their labor for nothing. But feeling the insufficiency of this copying, I once more laid hold of language and rhythm which were more obedient to my wishes. With what life, joy, and impetuosity I went to this work may be seen from many poems which proclaim enthusiastically the art of nature, and the nature of art, and which, at the moment of their production, infused new spirit into me as well as into my friends.

As once at this epoch, and with these occupations, I sat with a struggling light in my chamber, to which the air of an artist's studio was thus imparted, while the walls, stuck over and covered with half-finished works, gave the impression of a great activity, a well-formed, slender man came in, whom, at first, in the twilight, I took for Fritz Jacobi; but soon discovering my mistake, I greeted him as a stranger. In his free and pleasing bearing a military air was perceptible. He gave me his name, Von Knebel, and from a few introductory words I gathered that he was in the Prussian service, and that during a long residence at Berlin and Potsdam he had formed a profitable and active acquaintance with the literary men of those places, and with German literature in general. He had attached himself particularly to Ramler, and had adopted his mode of reciting poems. He was also familiar with all that Götz had written, who, at that time, was without reputation among the Germans. Through his exertions the *Mädcheninsel* of this poet had been printed at Potsdam, and had fallen into the hands of the king, who was said to have expressed himself favorably upon it.

We went over these subjects of general interest in German literature, and then I learned to my satisfaction that he was at

present stationed in Weimar, having been appointed the companion of Prince Constantin. Of matters there I had already received a favorable impression ; from several strangers who had come to us from that place we had learned the fact that the Duchess Amalia had called together the best men for the education of her princes ; that the Academy of Jena, through its admirable teachers, also contributed its part to this excellent purpose ; and that the arts were not only protected by the above-mentioned princess, but were practised by her with zeal and profound knowledge. We also heard that Wieland was in especial favor. The *Deutscher Merkur*, too, which united the labors of so many scholars in other places, contributed not a little to the fame of the city in which it was published. One of the best theatres in Germany was also there in operation, made famous by its actors as well as by the authors who were employed for it. These advantages and these noble institutions were, it was thought, disturbed and threatened with a long stagnation by the terrible conflagration of the castle, which took place in May of that year. But the confidence in the hereditary prince was so great that none doubted that this injury would not only be repaired, but that in spite of it every other hope would be richly accomplished. As I inquired after these persons and things, as if I were an old acquaintance, and expressed the wish to become more intimately acquainted with them, the new comer replied in a very friendly way that nothing was easier, as the hereditary prince, with his brother, the Prince Constantin, had just arrived in Frankfort, and wished to see me and know me. I at once expressed the greatest willingness to wait upon them, and my new friend told me that I must not delay, as their stay would not be long. In order to prepare myself I carried my visitor to my father and mother, who were surprised at his arrival, and the message he bore, and conversed with him with great satisfaction. I at once hastened with him to the young princes, who received me in a very free and friendly manner ; the tutor of the hereditary prince, Count Görtz, appeared also to see me not without pleasure. Though there was no lack of literary subjects for the conversation, an accident served as the best possible introduction to it, and rendered it at once important and profitable.

Möser's patriotic Fantasies, the first part of them in fact, were lying on the table newly bound up and uncut. As I was familiar with them, but the others hardly knew them at all, I had the advantage of being able to give a complete account of them, and here was an incomparable opportunity to speak with a young prince who had a sincere desire and a firm determination to make use of his station for the greatest good. Möser's statement, as regards both its contents and its tone, must be most interesting to every German. Though division, anarchy, and impotence, were usually brought as a reproach against the German empire, from Möser's point of view the mass of small states appeared highly desirable for the extension of particular cultivation, according to necessities arising from the situation and peculiarities of such widely different provinces. Starting with the city, with the foundation of Osnaburg, and going over the circle of Westphalia, he set forth its relation to the whole empire, and in the examination of the subject united the past with the present and deduced one thing from another, thus determining most clearly whether an alteration were worthy of praise or blame. In this he gave an example of the method in which every ruler should proceed in order to obtain the best knowledge as to the situation of the state he governs, its connexion with its neighbors and with the whole, and thus to gain the ability of judging both the present and the future.

At this time many things came up relating to the difference between the states of Upper and Lower Saxony, and how both their natural productions and manners, laws, and customs, had differed from the earliest times, and, with their forms of government and religion, had led affairs now in this way and now in that. We endeavored to obtain a clearer view of the differences between the two regions, and it at once appeared what advantage there was in having a good model which, regarded not in its specialities but in the method on which it is based, can be applied in the most various cases, and in that very way can contribute greatly to the formation of our judgment.

This conversation was kept up at the table, and made for me a better impression than I perhaps deserved. Instead of making those labors which belonged to my own proper sphere the subjects

of discussion ; instead of demanding an undivided attention for the drama and for romance, I appeared in Möser rather to prefer those writers whose talents were occupied with active life, and were thus immediately useful, while works properly poetic, above the interests of manners and customs, and the material interests of life, could only be indirectly and accidentally profitable. These discussions turned out like the stories of the thousand and one nights ; one important matter came up after another ; many themes were only touched upon without our being able to follow them out, and accordingly, as the stay of the young noblemen in Frankfort could be but a short one, they desired my promise to follow them to Mayence and spend some days there. I gave the promise with all my heart, and hastened home with this agreeable intelligence to impart it to my parents. .

My father, however, could not in any way be pleased with it. The sentiments of a citizen of the empire had always kept him aloof from the great, and although he was connected with the business managers of the neighboring princes and lords, he was still in no personal relations with them. In fact, courts were among the things about which he was accustomed to jest ; he was not displeased though when any one disputed him, only he was not satisfied unless his opponent maintained his side with wit and spirit. If we allowed his "*Procul a Jove procul a fulmine*" to pass, but added that with lightning the question was not so much Whence as Whither, he would bring up the old proverb, " With great lords it is not good to eat cherries upon the road." We replied that it was worse yet to eat with dainty people out of one basket. This he would not deny, but was sure instantly to have another proverb at hand which would put us to our trumps. For as proverbs and apophthegms in rhymes have their origin among the people, who, since they are compelled to obey, like at least to speak ; while their superiors, on the other hand, indemnify themselves by actions ; and as the poetry of the sixteenth century is almost altogether nervous and didactic, there is in our language no deficiency of serious and jesting sayings, directed from below upwards. We juniors now began to aim from above downwards, fancying ourselves something great as we took up

the side of the great. Of these sayings and counter-sayings I will here insert a few.

A.

Long at court is long in hell !

B.

There many a good fellow warms himself well !

A.

Such as I am, I am mine own ;
Never to me shall a favor be shown.

B.

Why should you blush aught to receive ?
You must take favors if you would give.

A.

Trouble, all at the court must catch ;
Where it itches you dare not scratch.

B.

When orators unto the people appeal,
Where they scratch no itching they feel.

A.

The very best half of life they lose
Who servitude for their portion choose ;
And happen what will let them also know,
That the other half too to the devil will go.

B.

To him that with princes can make his home,
Fortune to-day or to-morrow will come ;
Who tries to the people to make himself dear
Has scattered a curse on the whole of the year.

A.

When at court the wheat-ear blooms fair and tall ;
Just think that nothing will come of it all ;
And when you fancy the granary's stored
Why then you haven't much of hoard.

B.

If the wheat bloom, it will ripen also,
That's the old fashion, as who doesn't know ?
And if hail beats the harvest down to the plain,
The very next year it will flourish again.

A.

Who will belong to himself alone,
 Let him shut himself up in a cot of his own,
 Company find in his children and wife,
 Drink nothing but light new wine,
 And never immoderately dine,
 And nothing will hinder the course of his life.

B.

Do you want from the Ruler to get away ?
 And where do you think of going to, pray ?
 O don't be so sure how the matter will stand !
 Your wife has you safely under her hand,
 And she her stupid brat must obey,
 So in your own house you're a slave every day.

As I was just now looking up the foregoing rhymes in some old memorandum books, there fell into my hands several such *jeux d'esprit*, in which we had amplified old German pithy sayings, and contrasted them with other proverbs whose truth experience verifies. A selection from them may perhaps hereafter, as epilogue to the puppet show, give occasion for good-humored reflection.

But all these rejoinders could not convert my father from his opinions. He was in the habit of saving his most stringent argument for the close of the discussion ; it consisted in a minute description of Voltaire's adventure with Frederick the Second. He told us how the excessive favor, the familiarity, the mutual expressions of politeness, at once were revoked and disappeared. At the same time the spectacle was seen of the arrest of that extraordinary poet and writer by Frankfort town-soldiers, on the requisition of the Resident Freytag, and the command of the Burgomaster Fichard, and his confinement for some time in the tavern of the Rose, on the *Zeil*. To this we might have answered in many ways, among others, that Voltaire was not free from blame himself, but from filial respect we always yielded the point. When at that time these things and others like them were alluded to, I hardly knew how to demean myself, for he warned me explicitly, maintaining that the invitation was given only to entice me into a trap, in order to take vengeance on me for my mischievousness towards the favored Wieland. Much as I was

convinced of the opposite, yet as I saw but too plainly that a preconceived opinion, excited by hypochondriac fancies, afflicted the estimable man, I did not wish to act directly against his convictions. Still I could not find any pretence under which I could retract my promise without appearing ungrateful and disbelieving. Unfortunately our Fräulein Von Klettenberg, to whose advice we resorted in such cases, was confined to her bed. In her and my mother I had two incomparable companions ; I called them Word and Deed. When the former cast her serene or rather blissful glance over earthly things, what was confusion to the rest of us children of earth, at once grew plain before her. She could almost always point out the right way, because she looked upon the labyrinth from above, and was not herself lost in it. When a decision was once arrived at, the ready energy of my mother could be relied on. While the former had Sight for her helper the latter had Faith, and as she maintained her self-possession in all cases, she was never without the means of accomplishing what was proposed or desired. Now she was despatched to our sick friend to obtain her approbation, and when this was given in my behalf, she was entreated to gain the consent of my father, who yielded, though incredulously and unwillingly.

It was in a very cold season of the year that I arrived at the appointed hour in Mayence. I was received by the young princes and by their attendants, according to the invitation, in the most friendly way. The conversation in Frankfort was recalled and renewed where we had left it, and when we fell upon the most recent German literature and its peculiar audacities, it was perfectly natural that my famous piece, "Gods, Heroes, and Wieland," should come up, at which I remarked with satisfaction that the thing was regarded with serenity and even with amusement. I was called on to narrate the history of this *jeu d'esprit*, which had excited so great attention. I could not avoid confessing, first of all, that as true workmen of the Upper Rhine, we had no bounds either to our liking or disliking. With us, reverence for Shakspeare was carried to adoration. But Wieland, with his decided peculiarity of destroying his own interest and that of his readers, had bestowed considerable blame

on the great author in the notes to his translation, and that in such a way as to vex us exceedingly, and to diminish, in our eyes, the value of the work. We saw Wieland, for whom, as a poet, we had so high a respect, and who, as a translator, had rendered us so great a service, to be capricious, one-sided, and unjust as a critic. Besides this, he declared himself against our idols, the Greeks, which sharpened our hostility yet more. It is well known that the Greek gods and heroes are not distinguished for moral but for glorious physical qualities, for which reason they afford such splendid subjects for sculpture. Wieland, in his *Alceste*, had presented heroes and demi-gods after the modern fashion, against which nothing could be said, as every one is free to transform poetic traditions according to his own ends and way of thinking. But in the letters on this opera, which he inserted in the *Merkur*, he appeared to us to defend this mode of treatment too much like a partisan, and to commit an unpardonable sin against the good ancients and their higher style, by his total unwillingness to recognise the strong, healthy nature which is the basis of their productions. We had hardly discussed these grievances with some vehemence in our little society, than the ordinary rage for dramatizing everything came upon me one Sunday afternoon, and with a flask of good Burgundy at my side, I wrote down the whole piece, just as it stands, in one sitting. It was no sooner read to those of my fellow-members who were present, and received by them with exclamations of delight, that I sent the manuscript to Lenz at Strasburg, who appeared enraptured with it, and would have it printed on the spot. After some writing back and forwards, I consented, and he put it hastily to press in Strasburg. Some time after, I learned that this was one of the first steps by which Lenz designed to injure me, and to bring me into disgrace with the public ; but at that time I neither knew nor surmised anything of it.

In this way I narrated to my new patrons with complete ingenuousness the harmless origin of the piece, as well as I knew it myself. I wished to convince them perfectly that there was in it no personality, or any other than the true purpose ; I also let them understand the gay and headlong way in which we were accustomed to banter and ridicule each other among ourselves.

With this, I saw that they were quite content. They almost wondered at our great fear that some one of us might sleep upon his laurels. They compared such a society to those freebooters who, in every moment of repose, are afraid of becoming effeminate, and whose leaders, when there are no enemies at hand, and nobody to rob, let off a pistol under the mess-table, so that even in peace there may be no want of wounds and pains. After considerable discussion *pro* and *con* upon this subject, I was at last put up to writing Wieland a friendly letter. I very gladly seized the occasion, as he had expressed himself in the *Merkur* in the most liberal manner about this piece of youthful folly, and as was almost always his custom in literary feuds, ended the matter in a brilliant and skilful manner.

The few days of my stay at Mayence passed off very pleasantly. When my new patrons were abroad on visits and banquets, I remained with their attendants, drew the portraits of several, and went skating, for which the frozen ditches of the fortifications afforded the best opportunity. I went home full of the kindness I had met with, and designed, on my entrance into the house, to relieve my heart by a minute account of it; but I saw only troubled faces. It did not long remain unknown to me that our friend Fräulein von Klettenberg was departed. At this I was greatly concerned, because, in my situation at the moment, I needed her more than ever. They told me for my consolation, that a pious death had been added to her happy life, and that the cheerfulness of her faith had remained undisturbed to the end. There was also another obstacle to my freely imparting the whole. My father, instead of rejoicing at the fortunate issue of this little adventure, persisted in his opinion, and maintained that on the other side it was nothing but dissimulation, and that perhaps in the end something worse was intended to be carried out against me. I was thus driven to my younger friends with my narrative, and to them I could not deliver the matter minutely enough. But, out of attachment and good will, there came from this a result to me most unpleasant. Shortly afterwards, there appeared a pamphlet, called "Prometheus and his Reviewers," also in dramatic form. In it the comical idea was carried out, of putting little wood-cut figures into the dialogue, instead of proper

names. Those critics who had expressed an opinion upon my works and works akin to them, were represented by all sorts of satirical images. In one place the Altona post-rider, without his head, was blowing his horse, here a bear was growling, and there a goose was cackling. The *Merkur*, too, was not forgotten, and many wild and tame animals were represented in the *atelier* of the sculptor endeavoring to put him out. He, without taking particular notice of them, kept zealously at his work, and did not refrain from expressing his opinion about the matter in general. The appearance of this *jeu d'esprit* surprised me very disagreeably, because by its style and tone it must be by some one of our society, and indeed it must have been attributed to me. But what was most disagreeable, was, that "Prometheus" brought out some things relating to my stay at Mayence and what was said there, which nobody but myself should have known. To me this was a proof that the author must be one of my most intimate circle of friends, who had heard me relate these events and circumstances in detail. We looked at each other, and each suspected the other, but the unknown writer knew how to hide successfully. I uttered vehement reproaches against him, because it was exceedingly vexatious to me, after so gracious a reception and so important a conversation, and after the confiding letter I had written to Wieland, to see here the occasion for new distrust and new disagreement. But my uncertainty on this point was not of long duration, for as I walked up and down my room reading the book aloud, I heard clearly in the fancies and the turns of expression the voice of Wagner—and it was he. When I sprang down stairs to my mother, to impart my discovery, she confessed to me that she already knew it. Alarmed at the ill results of what seemed to him a good and praiseworthy plan, he had discovered himself to her, and besought her intercession, so that I might not fulfil my threat of having no further intercourse with the writer on account of abused confidence. There also came to his aid the fact that I had found him out myself, and was inclined to be appeased by the satisfaction always attending a discovery of one's own. The fault which had given occasion for such a proof of my sagacity, was forgiven. Nevertheless it was not so easy to convince the public that Wagner was the au

thor, and that I had had no hand in the game. It was not believed that he possessed such versatility of talent. No one reflected, that without possessing any remarkable gifts, he might notice, seize upon, and bring out finely in his own way all that had been done in jest and earnest for some time in an intellectual society. And thus I had this time, and very often afterwards, to suffer not only for my own follies, but also for the indiscretion and precipitancy of my friends.

As the coincidence of many circumstances recalls them to me, I will speak of several distinguished men who, at different times, on their passage through Frankfort, either lodged at our house or partook of our friendly hospitality. Once more Klopstock stands justly at the head. I had already exchanged several letters with him, when he announced to me that he was invited to go to Carlsruhe and reside there, and that he would be in Friedberg at an appointed time, and wished that I would come there and bring him to Frankfort. I did not fail to be there at the hour, but he had been accidentally detained upon his way; and after I had waited in vain for some days, I went home. Some time after he arrived, excused his delay, and received very kindly my readiness to come to meet him. His person was small but well built, his manners serious and precise: without being stiff in his conversation, he was exact and agreeable. On the whole, his presence had in it something of the diplomatist. Such a man undertakes the difficult task of supporting his own dignity and that of a superior to whom he is responsible, of advancing his own interest with the much more important interest of a prince or of whole States, and of making himself, beyond all things, pleasing to other men while in this critical position. In this way Klopstock appeared to bear himself both as a man of worth and as the representative of higher things—of religion, of morality and freedom. He had also assumed another peculiarity of men of the world—namely, not to speak readily on subjects upon which he was particularly expected and desired to speak. He was seldom heard to mention poetic and literary subjects. But as he found in me and my friends a set of passionate skaters, he discoursed to us at length on this noble art, on which he had profoundly reflected, both as to what in it was to be sought, and what

avoided. Still, before we could receive his willing instruction, we had to submit to be put right as to the word itself, in which we blundered. We spoke in good High-German of *Schlittschuhen* (sled-shoes), which he would not allow to pass at all ; for the word does not come from *Schlitten* (sled), as if one went on little runners, but from *Schreiten* (to stride), because like the Homeric gods the skater strides away on these winged shoes over the sea frozen into a plain. Next we came to the instrument itself. He would have nothing to do with the high grooved skates, but recommended the low, broad, smooth-bottomed Friseland steel skates as the most serviceable for speed. He was no friend to the flourishes and tricks of art which are usually made in this exercise. I procured, according to his advice, such a pair of smooth skates, with long toes, and used them for several years, though with some discomfort. He understood, too, the science of horsemanship and horse-breaking, and liked to talk about it. So he commonly avoided, by design, as it seemed, all conversation upon his own profession, to speak with greater freedom about foreign arts, which he pursued only as pastime. I might say much more of these and other peculiarities of this extraordinary man, if those who have lived longer with him had not already informed us fully about them. One observation, however, I will not suppress, which is, that men to whom Nature has given uncommon advantages, when placed in a narrow circle of activity, or at least in one not suited to them, generally fall into eccentricities ; and as they do not know how to make any direct use of their gifts, seek to make an extraordinary or whimsical one.

Zimmermann was also for a time our guest. He was tall and powerfully built, of vehement and impulsive nature, but had his exterior and manners perfectly under control, so that in society he appeared as a skilful physician and polished man of the world. It was only in his writings and most confidential intercourse that he gave free course to his inwardly untamed character. His conversation was varied and highly instructive, and for one who could pardon his active sense of his own personality and merits, no more desirable companion could be found. For myself, as what is called frivolity never disturbed me, and I in return often presumed to be frivolous also—that is, did not hesitate to bring

out what in myself gave me pleasure, I got on with him perfectly. We mutually tolerated and scolded each other, and, as he showed himself open and communicative, I learned a great deal from him in a short time.

To judge such a man gratefully, kindly, and thoroughly, I cannot say that he was frivolous. We Germans misuse the word frivolous quite too often. In a precise sense, it carries with it the idea of vacuity, and we properly designate by it only the man who cannot conceal his joy over his Nothing, his contentment with a vacant existence. With Zimmermann it was exactly the opposite; he had great deserts, and no inward satisfaction. The man who cannot enjoy his own natural gifts in silence, and find his reward in their exercise, but waits and hopes for the recognition and appreciation of others, is in an unfortunate condition, because it is but too well known that men are very sparing of applause, that they mingle alloy with praise, and where it can in any degree be done, turn it into blame. Whoever appears before the public without being prepared for this, can expect nothing but vexation. If he does not over-estimate what he produces, it still has for him a value without limits, while there are very definite boundaries set to it whenever it is received by the world; besides, a certain susceptibility is necessary for praise and applause, as for every other pleasure. Let this be applied to Zimmermann, and it must be acknowledged here too that no one can obtain what he does not bring with him.

If this apology cannot be allowed, we shall still less be able to justify another fault of this remarkable man, because it disturbed and even destroyed the happiness of others. I mean his conduct towards his children. His daughter, who travelled with him, stayed with us while he was looking about in the neighborhood. She was some sixteen years old, slender and well formed, but without beauty; her regular features would have been agreeable, if there had appeared in them a trace of sympathy, but she was always as quiet as a statue; she seldom spoke, and never in the presence of her father. But after having spent a few days alone with my mother, receiving the cheerful, genial influence of this sympathizing woman, she threw herself at her feet with a thousand tears gushing from her heart, and begged

that she might remain with her. With this burst of passion she declared that she would remain in the house as a servant, as a slave, if she only might not go back to her father, of whose severity and tyranny no person could form an idea. Her brother had gone mad at his treatment ; she had borne it with difficulty thus long, because she had believed that it was the same in every family, or not much better, but now that she had experienced such a loving, sunny, and gentle manner, her situation at home had become to her a perfect hell. My mother was greatly moved as she related to me this passionate effusion, and indeed, she went so far in her sympathy, that she not obscurely gave me to understand that she would be content to keep the child in the house, if I would make up my mind to marry her. If she were an orphan, I replied, I might think about it and act in the case, but God keep me from a father-in-law who is such a father ! My mother took great pains with the good child, but this made her only the more unhappy. At last an escape was found for her, by putting her in a boarding school. Her life was not a very long one.

I should hardly mention this blamable characteristic of a man of such great deserts, if it had not already become a matter of public notoriety, especially through the unfortunate hypochondria, with which in his last hours he tortured himself and others. His severity towards his children was also a hypochondria, a partial insanity, a continuous moral homicide which, after having sacrificed his children, he at last directed against himself. We must, however, remember that though apparently in such good health, he was a sufferer in his best years, and that an incurable disease troubled the skilful physician who had helped, and still helped so many of the afflicted. Yes, this resolute man, with the respect of others, fame, honor, rank, and wealth, led the saddest life, and whoever will take the pains to learn more about it from existing publications, will not condemn him, but pity him.

If it is now expected that I shall give a more precise account of the effect which this distinguished man had upon me I will once more recall the general features of that period. The epoch in which we were living might be called the epoch of demands, for every one required of himself and of others what no mortal

had hitherto accomplished. On chosen spirits who could think and feel, a light had arisen, in which they saw that an immediate original understanding of nature, and an activity based upon it, was the best thing a man could desire, and a thing not difficult to attain. Experience thus once more became the universal watchword, and every one opened his eyes as well as he could. Physicians, especially, had the most pressing cause to labor to this end, and opportunities to seek for it. Upon them a star shone out of antiquity, which could serve as an example of all that was to be desired. The writings which had come down to us under the name of Hippocrates, furnished a model of the way in which a man should observe the world, and relate what he had seen without mingling himself with it. But no one considered that we could not see like the Greeks, and that we shall never become such poets, sculptors, and physicians as they. Granted that we could learn from them, still we had, in the meanwhile, gone through with a large amount of experience, and that not always of the clearest kind ; besides, experience had very often taken the form of preconceived opinions. All this was to be known, discriminated, and sifted. This, also, was an immense demand, and withal, each one was required in his personal observation and action, to become acquainted with the true, healthy nature, as if she were for the first time noticed, and taken in hand, and thus only what was genuine and real was to be done. But as learning, in general, cannot be conceived without a universal smattering and a universal pedantry, or the practice of any profession without empiricism and charlatanry, there sprang up a violent conflict, the purpose of which was to separate use from abuse, and gain for the kernel the upper hand over the shell. In the execution of this design, it was perceived that the shortest way of getting through with the thing, was to call in the aid of genius, whose magic gifts could settle the strife, and accomplish what was required. Meanwhile, however, the understanding meddled with the matter ; all was to be put into clear notions, and set out in a logical form, so that every prejudice should be put aside, and all superstition destroyed. And as the achievements of some extraordinary men, such as Boerhaave and Haller, were actually incredible, people seemed justified in

demanding even more from their pupils and successors. It was maintained that the path was opened, although in earthly things a path can very rarely be spoken of, for, as the water that is dislodged by a ship, instantly flows in again behind it, so error, when eminent spirits have driven it aside, and made a place for themselves, very quickly closes up again after them, according to its nature.

But of this the brave Zimmermann could form no idea whatever; he would not confess that absurdity in fact filled up the world. The impatience with which he rushed upon everything that he recognised and held to be wrong, amounted to a mania. It was all the same to him whether he was fighting with a nurse or with Paracelsus, with a quacksalver or a chemist, his blows fell alike in either case. When he had got himself out of breath, he was greatly astonished to see the heads of this hydra which he had expected to crush beneath his feet, all fresh again, showing him the teeth of their innumerable jaws.

Every one who reads his writings, especially his excellent work on Experience, will perceive more definitely what was discussed between him and me. His influence was the more powerful over me, from the twenty years that he was my senior. Having a high reputation as a physician, he was chiefly employed among the upper classes, and the corruption of the times, caused by effeminacy and excess, was a constant subject of his conversation. Thus his medical discourses, like those of the philosophers and of my poetic friends, impelled me again back to nature. His vehement passion for improvement I could not fully share in, but rather, after we had separated, I drew instantly back into my own peculiar function, and endeavored to employ the gifts nature had bestowed upon me, with moderate exertion, and in good-natured opposition to what I disapproved of, so as to get a field for myself, without regarding how far my efforts might reach or whither they might lead me.

Salis, who was setting up the large boarding school at Marschlin, visited us also at that time. He was an earnest and intelligent man, and must have made many humorous observations on the genial mode of life in our little society. The same thing may have happened to Sulzer, who came in upon us on his jour-

ney to the south of France ; at least a passage in his travels which speaks of me, seems to allude to it.

These visits, which were as agreeable as they were profitable, were also accompanied by others which we should rather have been spared. Needy and shameless adventurers fixed themselves on the confiding youth, supporting their urgent demands by real as well as fictitious relationships and misfortunes. They borrowed my money, and made it necessary for me to borrow in turn, so that I thereby fell into the most unpleasant relations with opulent and kind-hearted friends. If I wished all such supplants to the crows, my father found himself in the situation of the magician's apprentice, who would like very much to see his house washed clean, but is frightened when the flood rushes in without ceasing over threshold and stairs. By my father's excessive kindness, the moderate plan of life which he had designed for me was step by step interrupted and put off, and from one day to another changed contrary to all expectation. My stay at Regensburg and Vienna was as good as given up, though on my way to Italy I was to go through those cities, so as at least to gain a general notion of them. On the other hand, some of my friends, who could not approve of so long a circuit to get into active life, were of opinion that I should use a moment which seemed in every way so favorable, and think on a permanent establishment in my native city. Although the council was closed to me, first by my grandfather and then by my uncle, there were yet many civil offices to which I could lay claim, where I could remain for a time and wait for the future. There were agencies of several kinds which offered employment enough, and these places were respectable. I suffered myself to be persuaded, and believed also, that I might adapt myself to this plan, without having tried whether I could be suited by such a mode of life and business as requires that we should have an end in view, even in dissipation. To these plans and designs there was now added a tender sentiment which seemed to draw me towards a more domestic life and to accelerate my determination.

The society of young men and women that I have before spoken of, as owing its coherence if not its origin to my sister, still remained after her marriage and departure, because they had

grown accustomed to each other, and could not spend one evening in the week better than in this friendly circle. The eccentric orator whose acquaintance we made in the sixth book, had also returned to us after many adventures, more clever and more familiar with the world, and once again played the legislator of the little state. As a sequel to our former diversions he had devised something of the same kind ; he enacted that every week lots should be drawn, not as before to decide as to pairs of lovers, but as to real married couples. How lovers should conduct themselves towards each other, he said, we knew well enough ; but the proper deportment of husbands and wives in society we were ignorant of, and with our increasing years ought to learn first of all things. He laid down general rules, which, of course, set forth that we must act as if we did not belong to each other ; we could not sit or speak much together, much less indulge in anything like caresses. With this we were not only to avoid everything which could occasion mutual suspicion and discord, but, on the other hand, the greatest praise would be gained by him who should know how, in an unconstrained way, to confer obligations upon his wife.

The lots were at once drawn, some odd matches that they decided on were laughed and joked about, and the universal marriage-comedy was begun in good humor and renewed every week.

In this it turned out strangely enough, that from the first the same lady fell twice to me. She was a very good creature, just such a woman as one would like to think of as his wife. Her person was beautiful and regular, her face pleasing, and in her manners there prevailed a repose which testified to the health of her mind and body. Every day and hour she was perfectly like herself. Her domestic industry was in high repute. Though she was not talkative, a just understanding and a natural culture could be recognised in her expressions. It was easy to meet such a person with friendliness and esteem ; I was already accustomed to do it from a universal feeling, and now I acted from a sort of traditional kindness as a social duty. But when the lot brought us together for the third time, our jocose law-giver declared in the most solemn manner that Heaven had spoken,

and we could not again be separated. We both accepted it, and mutually adapted ourselves so well to our public conjugal duties, that we might almost have served as a model. All the pairs which were marked for the evening, were obliged by the general regulations to address each other for the few hours with *Du*. In consequence, after a series of weeks, we had grown so accustomed to this confidential pronoun, that whenever we two met in the intervening times, the *Du* came kindly out. Habit is a strange thing ; after a while both of us found nothing more natural than this relation. I liked her more and more, and her way with me gave evidence of a beautiful calm confidence, so that more than once if a priest had been present we might have been united without much thought about it.

As at each of our social gatherings something new was required to be read aloud, one evening I brought with me a perfectly fresh novelty, The Memoir of Beaumarchais against Clavigo, in the original. It gained great applause. The thoughts to which it gave occasion were freely expressed, and after much had been spoken on both sides, my partner said : "If I were thy liege lady and not thy wife, I would entreat thee to change this memoir into a play : it seems to me perfectly adapted to that." "That thou mayst see, my love," I replied, "that mistress and wife can be united in one person, I promise that, at the end of a week, the subject-matter of this manuscript, in the form of a piece for the theatre, shall be read aloud, as has just been done with these pages." They wondered at so bold a promise, and I did not delay setting about its accomplishment. What, in such cases, is called invention, was with me instantaneous. As I was escorting home my titular wife I was silent. She asked me what was the matter ? "I am thinking out the play," I answered, "and have got into the midst of it. I wish to show thee that I gladly do something to please thee." She pressed my hand, and as I in return snatched a kiss, she said : "Thou must not fall out of thy character ! People think that tenderness is not proper for married people." "Let them think," I rejoined, "we will have it our own way."

Before I got home, though indeed I took a very circuitous way, the piece was pretty far advanced. Lest this should seem boast-

ful, I will confess that previously, on the first and second reading, the subject had come before me in a dramatic and even theatrical form, but, without such an incitement, like so many other pieces it would have remained among the number of the merely possible creations. My mode of treating it is well enough known. Weary of villains who, from revenge, hate, or mean purposes, attack a noble nature and ruin it, I wished, in Carlos, to show the working of clear good sense, with true friendship, against passion, impulse, and outward necessity ; in order, for once, to compose a tragedy in this way. After the example of our patriarch Shakspeare, I did not hesitate for a moment to translate, word for word, the chief scenes, and what was properly dramatic in the original. Finally, for the conclusion, I borrowed the end of an English ballad, and so I was ready before Friday came. The good effect which I attained in the reading will easily be believed. My liege spouse took not a little pleasure in it, and it seemed as if our relation was made more intimate and firm by this production, as if by an intellectual progeny.

Mephistopheles Merk did me here, for the first time, a great injury. As I communicated the piece to him, he answered : " You must write no more such trifles hereafter ; others can do such things." In this he was wrong. We should not, in all things, transcend the ideas which men have already formed ; it is good that much should be in accordance with the common way of thinking. Had I at that time written a dozen such pieces, which with a little stimulus would have been easy enough, three or four of them would perhaps have retained their places on the stage. Every management which knows how to prize its list of stock pieces can say what an advantage that would be.

By these, and other intellectual diversions, our whimsical marriage-game became a family story, if not the talk of the town. The mothers of our fair ones found this no unpleasant sound in their ears. My mother, also, was not at all opposed to such an event ; she had before looked with favor on the lady with whom I had fallen into so strange a relation, and did not doubt that she would make as good a daughter-in-law as a wife. The aimless bustle in which I had for some time lived was not to her mind, and, in fact, she had the worst of it to bear. It was her part to

provide abundant entertainment for the stream of guests, without any compensation for furnishing quarters to this literary army, other than the honor they did her son by feasting upon him. Besides, it was clear to her that so many young persons—all of them together without property—united not only for scientific and poetic purposes, but also to pass the time in the gayest manner, would come to loss and injury among themselves, and most certainly of them all myself, whose thoughtless generosity and passion for becoming security for others she well knew.

Accordingly, she looked on the long-planned Italian journey, which my father once more brought forward, as the best means of cutting through all these relations at once. But, in order that no new danger should spring up in the wide world, she thought first to make fast the union which had already been introduced, so as to make a return into my native country more desirable, and my final determination more decided. Whether I only attributed this scheme to her, or whether she had actually formed it with her departed friend, I could not be sure ; enough, that her actions seemed to be based on a well-digested plan. I very often had to hear from her that since Cornelia's marriage our family circle was altogether too small ; we must feel that from me a sister had departed, from my mother an assistant, and from my father a pupil ; nor were these sayings all. It happened, as if by accident, that my parents met the lady I have spoken of, invited her into the garden, and conversed with her for a long time. Thereupon there was some pleasantry at the tea-table, and the remark was made with a certain satisfaction that she had pleased my father, as she possessed the chief qualities which he, as a connoisseur, required in a woman.

Then one thing after another was arranged in the lower story, as if guests were expected ; the linen was reviewed, and some long neglected furniture was thought of. One day I surprised my mother in a garret examining the old cradles, among which an immense one of walnut inlaid with ivory and ebony, in which I had formerly been rocked, was especially prominent. She did not seem quite content when I said to her, that such swing-boxes were quite out of vogue, and that the fashion was to put babies,

with free limbs, in a neat little basket, and carry them about for show, by a strap over the shoulder, like other small wares.

Enough, that such prognostics of a renewal of domestic activity became more frequent, and, as I was in every way submissive, the thought of a state which would last through life spread such a peace over our house and its inhabitants as had not been enjoyed for a long time.

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BOOK SIXTEENTH.

TRUTH AND POETRY ;

FROM MY OWN LIFE.



SIXTEENTH BOOK.

“ MISFORTUNES never come alone,” is the common saying. The same may be said of good fortune, and, indeed, of other circumstances which gather about us in a harmonious way, whether it be a fatality of ours, or whether it be that man has the power of drawing to him all that is co-related.

At any rate, I this time experienced that everything conspired to produce an outward and an inward peace. The former was mine, inasmuch as I patiently awaited the result of what they were meditating and intending for me ; but the latter I had to attain by the renewal of my studies.

I had not thought of Spinoza for a long time, and now I was driven to him by what was said against him. In our library I found a little book, the author of which took up violently against that peculiar thinker ; and to go the more effectually to work, he had placed against the title-page a picture of Spinoza, with the inscription : “ *Signum reprobationis in vultu gerens* ” (he bears the mark of reprobation on his face). One could not deny it, indeed, while he looked at the picture ; for the engraving was miserable, a perfect caricature ; and I could not help thinking of those controversialists who, when they conceive a dislike to any one, first disfigure him, and then fight him as a monster.

This little book, however, made no impression upon me, since I had no especial love for controversies, but chose always to learn of the man himself how he thought, instead of hearing another tell how he ought to have thought. Still, curiosity led me to the

article "Spinoza," in Bayle's Dictionary, a work as valuable for its learning and acuteness as it is laughable and pernicious for its gossiping quackery.

The article "Spinoza" excited displeasure and mistrust in me. In the first place, the man was represented as an atheist, and his opinions as most abominable ; but immediately after it was confessed that he was a calm, reflective, diligent scholar, a good citizen, a sympathizing neighbor, and a peaceable, domestic man. They seemed to have quite forgotten the words of the gospel: "*By their fruits ye shall know them,*" else how could a life pleasing in the sight of God and man spring from such corrupt sources?

I well remembered what calmness and clearness came over me when I first turned over the posthumous works of that remarkable author. This effect was still quite distinct upon me, though I was not able to recall many particulars ; so I speedily had recourse again to the works to which I had owed so much, and again the same calm air breathed over me. I gave myself up to this reading, and seemed, while I looked into myself, as if I never had beheld the world so clearly.

As there has been, even in these later times, such earnest controversy on this subject, I wish not to be misunderstood, and will here add somewhat about these so much feared, yea, abhorred speculations.

Our physical as well as social life, manners, customs, economy, philosophy, religion, and many an accidental event, all call upon us, and tell us *we must deny ourselves*. So much which is inmost and peculiar to us we are not allowed to develope ; so much which we need from without for the completion of our being is withheld : while, on the other hand, so much is forced upon us which to us is as foreign as it is burdensome. They rob us of the rewards of labor, of the gifts of friendship, and before we see the matter clearly as it is, we find ourselves compelled to part with our personality, first piecemeal and then wholly—whereby at last it comes to this, that he is no longer respected who shows himself surly on that account. The bitterer the cup, so much the rather must he wear the pleasantest face he can, that the composed spectators may not be disturbed by any kind of a grimace.

To solve this problem, however, nature has endowed man with rich power, activity, and toughness. Especially does volatility (*Leichtsinn*) come to his aid. This is his indestructible heritage. By means of this he is able to renounce the particular object every moment, if he can only the next moment reach out after something new; and so, unconsciously, we keep restoring our whole life. We put one passion in the place of another; employments, inclinations, tastes, hobbies,—we try them all, only to exclaim at last, *All is vanity*. No one is shocked by this false, this blasphemous speech; nay, every one thinks, while he says it, that he says a wise and indisputable thing. A few men there are, and only a few, who anticipate this insupportable feeling, and, to avoid all partial resignations, resign themselves, once for all, to the Whole.

These men convince themselves of the Eternal, the Necessary, the Established, and seek to form to themselves ideas which are Incorruptible,—ideas which the thought of the Perishable does not do away, but rather strengthens and confirms. But since herein lies something actually superhuman, such persons are commonly esteemed *in*-human, monstrous, God-forsaken, and world-forsaken. People hardly know what sort of horns and claws to give them.

My confidence in Spinoza rested on the serene effect he wrought in me, and it only increased when they accused my worthy mystics of Spinozism, when I learned that Leibnitz himself could not escape this charge; nay, that Boerhaave, suspected of similar sentiments, had to quit Theology for Medicine.

But let no one think that I would have subscribed his writings, and confessed to them verbatim. For, that no one understands another; that no one attaches the same thoughts to the same words which another does; that a talk, a reading, excites in different persons different trains of thought: this I had long seen all too plainly; and the reader will trust the author of *Faust* and *Werther*, that he, deeply penetrated by such misunderstandings, would never cherish such an illusion himself as to think that he understood perfectly a man, who, as the scholar of Descartes, had raised himself, through mathematical and rabbinical

culture, to the summit of thought : who, even to this day, seems to be the goal of all speculative efforts.

What I appropriated to myself out of him, would be distinctly enough presented, if the visit of the "Wandering Jew" to Spinoza, which I had thought to introduce as a worthy ingredient in that poem, remained written down. But I pleased myself so well with the conception, and occupied myself so agreeably with it in silence, that I never came to the point of writing it out ; and the idea, which would have been well enough as a passing joke, expanded itself until it lost its charm, and I banished it from my mind as a troublesome thing. So far, however, as the main points of that relation to Spinoza remain in my mind—and they are never to be forgotten, for they exercised a great influence upon the course of my life—I will, in as short and condensed a manner as possible, unfold and present.

Nature works after such eternal, necessary, divine laws, that the Deity himself could alter nothing in them. In this, all men are unconsciously agreed. Think only how a natural phenomenon, which should intimate any degree of understanding, reason, or will, would instantly astonish and terrify us.

If anything like reason shows itself in beasts, we can scarce recover from our amazement ; for, although they stand near to us, yet they seem divided from us by an infinite gulf, and banished into the kingdom of necessity. Hence one cannot blame those thinkers, who have explained the infinitely ingenious, but strictly limited, construction of those creatures, wholly after the manner of a machine.

If we turn to plants, our remark is still more strikingly confirmed. Let any one account to himself for the feeling which seizes him at seeing the *Mimosa*, when it is touched, fold together its feathered leaves in pairs, and finally clap down its little stalk as if upon a joint (*Gewerbe*). Still higher rises that feeling, to which I will give no name, at the sight of the *Hedysarum Gy-rans*, which lifts up and down its little leaves, without any visible outward occasion, and seems to play with itself as with our thoughts. Imagine a *Pisang*, to which this gift were imparted, so that it could let down and lift up again by turns its huge leafy canopy all by itself ; whoever should see it for the first time would

step back for terror. So rooted within us is the idea of our own superiority, that we, once for all, refuse the outward world any part or portion in it ; nay, we would detract from the same in our equals, if we could.

A similar horror overtakes us, on the other hand, when we see a man act unreasonably against universally recognised moral laws, or unwisely against his own or others' advantage. To get rid of the repugnance which we feel on such occasions, we turn it immediately into a fault, into an abomination, and we seek to put such a man far from us, either actually or in thought.

This opposition, which Spinoza made so prominent, I applied strangely to my own being ; and what has been said is only enough to render intelligible what follows.

I had come to regard my indwelling poetic talent altogether as Nature ; the more so, as it had been chiefly directed to outward Nature, as its subject. The exercise of this poetic gift could indeed be excited and determined by circumstances ; but its most joyful, its richest action was spontaneous—nay, even against my will.

Through field and forest roaming,
My little songs still humming,
So went it all day long.

In my nightly vigils the same thing happened, and I often wished, like one of my predecessors, to get me a leathern jerkin made, and accustom myself to the dark, so that I might fix down at once whatever broke out unpremeditated. I was so apt to dictate a little song to myself, without being able to recall it again, that sometimes I ran to the desk, and, without taking time to adjust a sheet of paper that happened to be lying obliquely, wrote down the poem from beginning to end, diagonally, without moving from the spot. In this mood I was most pleased to get hold of the lead pencil, because this gave out the marks most readily ; for it sometimes happened that the scratching and spirting of the pen woke me from my somnambular poetizing, confused me, and stifled a little production in its birth. For such poems I had a particular reverence ; for I felt towards them somewhat as the hen does towards her chickens, which she

sees hatched and peeping about her. My old love of communicating these things only through private readings, returned to me : to exchange them for money seemed to me monstrous.

In this connexion I will mention an affair which took place indeed somewhat later. When my works were more and more in demand, and indeed a collection of them called for, these feelings held me back from undertaking it myself ; but Kimburg took advantage of my hesitation, and I unexpectedly received several copies of my collected works in print. With cool audacity this unbidden publisher could even boast to me of such a public service, and he offered to send me some Berlin porcelain by way of compensation, if I wished. On this occasion it occurred to me, that the Jews of Berlin, when they married, were obliged to take a certain quantity of porcelain, in order that the Royal manufactory might have custom. The contempt which this called forth towards the shameless pirate, led me to suppress the indignation which I could not but feel at such a robbery. I gave him no reply ; and while he was making himself very comfortable upon my property, I revenged myself in silence with the following verses :—

Fond memorials of by-gone years,
Faded flowers, and consecrated hairs,
Whitened ribbons, veils so lightly wove,
Sad remembrances of vanished love,
Doomed ere now by good rights to the flames ;
—These this Sosias snatches up and claims,
As of my poetic works and honor
He forsooth were lawful heir and owner ;
And to me this sorry comfort left,
Tea and coffee to recall the theft ?
Take your porcelain, your gingerbread !
For all Kimburgs I am dead.

This very Nature, however, which produced in me spontaneously so many greater and lesser works, was subject to deep pauses, when for a long time I would be unable, even with great effort, to produce anything, and consequently suffered often from ennui. Meeting such a strong resistance, the thought occurred to me whether I might not try the other course, and, using for my

own and others' profit and advantage the human, rational, and intellectual part of me, devote the interim, as I already had done, and as I was more and more called upon to do, to worldly occupations, and thus leave no one of my faculties unused. This course, which seemed to proceed from those general ideas before described, was so in harmony with my nature and my situation, that I formed the resolution of at once acting in this way, and of thus determining the wavering and hesitation to which I had hitherto been subject. Very pleasant was it to me to reflect, that I should be doing actual service to my fellow men, and might demand an actual reward, while on the contrary I might go on disinterestedly spending that lovely gift of nature as a sacred thing. By this consideration I rid myself of the bitterness which might have arisen in me, from being obliged to remark that precisely this talent, so courted and admired in Germany, was treated as a thing beyond the law's protection, free to anybody. For not only were reprisals considered perfectly allowable, and even pleasant things, in Berlin, but even the respectable Margrave of Baden, so praised for his administrative virtues, and the Emperor Joseph who had justified so many hopes, lent their sanction in this matter, one to his Macklot, and the other to his nobleman von Trattner; and it was declared, that the rights, as well as the property of genius, should belong unconditionally to booksellers and publishers.

One day, when we were complaining of this to a visitor from Baden, he related the following circumstance: Her ladyship, the Margravine, being a very active lady, had established a paper-manufactory; but the paper was so bad, that it was impossible to dispose of it. Thereupon the bookseller made the proposition, that he would print the German poets and prose writers on this paper, and thus enhance its value somewhat. They immediately set about it with both hands.

We concluded this to be a slanderous fabrication; but found our pleasure in it notwithstanding. The name of Macklot became a by-word at the time, and was mentioned in connexion with all mean transactions. And so, a versatile youth, often reduced to borrowing himself, while others' meanness was mak-

ing itself rich upon his talents, found himself sufficiently remunerated by a couple of good suggestions.

Happy children and youths wander on in a sort of intoxication, which is especially observable in the fact, that the good, innocent creatures scarcely know how to notice, and by no means clearly apprehend, the nature of their environment from time to time. They regard the world as raw material which they must shape, as a treasury which they must get into their possession. Everything belongs to them, everything seems penetrable to their will ; indeed, on this account, they often lose themselves in a wild savage nature. With the better part, however, this tendency unfolds itself into a moral enthusiasm, which, as it finds occasion, follows of its own accord some actual or seeming good, yet often suffers itself to be led and even misled.

Such was the case with the youth with whom we are entertaining ourselves ; and if he came rather strangely before men, still he seemed to be welcome to many. At the first meeting you found in him a freedom from reserve, a cheerful open-heartedness in conversation, and an earnest manner without forethought. Of the latter trait a story or two.

In the very close-built street of the Jews, there had been a severe conflagration. My universal benevolence, and the pleasure which I felt in lending active aid, led me to the spot, all dressed up as I was. A passage had been broken through from All Saints' street, and there I stationed myself. I found a great number of men busied with passing water—some with full buckets rushing forward, others with empty ones returning. I soon saw that, by forming a lane for the passing up and down of the buckets, the assistance might be doubled. I seized two full buckets and remained standing ; I called others to me ; those who came on were relieved of their load, while those returning arranged themselves in a row on the other side. The arrangement was applauded, my address and personal show of sympathy found favor, and the lane, from its commencement to its burning goal, was soon completed and closed up. Scarcely, however, had the cheerfulness which this inspired, called forth a joyous, I might even say, a merry humor in this living machine, all tending to one end, when the spirit of devilry and mischief also

began to appear. The wretched fugitives, dragging off their miserable substance upon their backs, got caught in the lane, found it difficult to pass through, and were not suffered to remain in peace. Saucy boys would sprinkle them with water, adding insult to misery. In a short time, however, by means of gentle words and eloquent reproofs, not without allusion, probably, to my clean clothes which I was risking, I contrived to stop their rudeness.

Some of my friends had approached, from curiosity, to gaze on the calamity, and seemed much astonished to see their companion, in shoes and silk stockings—for that was the universal fashion—engaged in this wet business. But few of them could I attract, the others laughed and shook their heads. We stood our ground a long while, for, as some went away, others stood prepared to take their places; yet many came merely for the sake of the spectacle, and so my innocent daring became universally known, and the strange license became the town talk of the day.

This readiness in action, prompted by any good-natured whim, and proceeding from a happy self-consciousness which men are apt to blame as vanity, made our friend renowned for other wonderful achievements.

A very inclement winter had completely covered the Main with ice, and made a solid floor of it. The liveliest society, both of business and pleasure, was stirring on the ice. Endless skating-paths, and wide, smoothly frozen plains, swarmed with the moving multitude. I failed not to be there in the early morning, and found myself, when my mother at a later hour came out to see the spectacle, actually frozen through, since I was lightly clad. She sat in the carriage, in her red, furred, velvet cloak, which, held together on her breast by a strong golden cord and tassel, looked quite stately. "Give me your furs, dear mother!" I cried out on the instant, without a moment's thought, "I am terribly frozen." She, too, took no thought; in a moment I had on the cloak, of purple color, which, reaching half way below the knees, was edged with sable and adorned with gold, and contrasted not badly with the brown fur cap I wore. Thus, carelessly, I went up and down; the crowd was so great that no especial notice was taken of the strange appearance, although there was some,

for it was often afterwards brought up among my eccentricities, both in earnest and in joke.

Leaving these recollections of happy and unconscious actions, we resume the peculiar thread of our narrative.

An intelligent Frenchman has said : If any good head happens to attract the attention of the public by a meritorious work, every one does his best to prevent his ever doing a similar thing again.

It is even so : something good and spirited is produced in the quiet seclusion of youth ; applause is won, but independence is lost ; they vex his concentrated talent to distraction, because they think that they may pull off and appropriate to themselves a portion of his personality.

In this sense I received a great many invitations, or, rather, not exactly invitations : a friend, an acquaintance would propose, commonly with an importunity which I could not resist, to introduce me here or there.

The *quasi* stranger, announced like a bear on account of his frequent surly refusals, and then again like Voltaire's Huron, or Cleveland's West Indian, like a child of nature with so many talents, excited curiosity, and in various families negotiations were set on foot to see him.

Among others, a friend one evening entreated me to go with him to a little concert, to be given in a reformed mercantile house of respectability. It was already late ; but as I loved to do everything from the spur of the moment, I followed him, decently dressed, as usual. We entered a chamber on the ground floor, the spacious sitting-room *par excellence*. The company was numerous, a piano stood in the middle, at which the only daughter of the house sat down immediately, and played with considerable facility and grace. I stood at the lower end of the piano, that I might be near enough to observe her form and bearing ; there was something child-like in her manner ; the motions she was obliged to make in playing were unconstrained and easy.

After the sonata was finished, she stepped towards the end of the piano to meet me ; we saluted, without further conversation,

for a quartette had already commenced. At the close of it, I stepped somewhat nearer and expressed some civil compliment; such as, the pleasure it gave me that my first acquaintance with her should have also made me acquainted with her talent. She knew how to make a very clever reply, and kept her position as I did mine. I saw that she observed me closely, and that I was really standing for a show; but I took it all in good part, since they gave me something graceful to look at in my turn. Meanwhile, we looked at one another, and I will not deny that I believed I felt an attractive power of the very gentlest kind. The moving about of the company, and her performances, prevented any further approach that evening. But I must confess to having had a pleasant feeling, when, at taking leave, the mother gave me to understand that they hoped to see me soon again, and the daughter seemed to join in the request with some friendliness. I did not fail, after suitable pauses, to repeat my visit, since cheerful and intellectual conversation grew up which seemed to prophesy no tie of passion.

In the meantime, the hospitality of our house once laid open caused many an inconvenience to my parents and myself; in my steadfast tendency to notice whatever was above me, to study it, to demand it, and if possible to imitate it, and create it, I had not arrived at anything further. Men, in so far as they were good, were pious; and, in so far as they were active, they were unwise and oftentimes unapt. The former could not help me, and the latter only confused me. One remarkable case of this I have carefully written down.

In the beginning of the year 1775, Jung, afterwards called Stilling, of Niederhein, announced that he was coming to Frankfurt, being called to an important case of disease of the eyes; he was welcomed by my parents and myself, and we offered him quarters. Herr von Lersner, a worthy man in years, universally esteemed for his success in the education and oversight of princely children, and for his intelligent manners at court or upon journeys, had been long afflicted with total blindness; but his strong desire to get relief had not entirely died out. Now, Jung, for several years past with good confidence and devoted energy, had performed many operations in Niederhein and gained a wide-

spread reputation. The candor of his soul, his truthfulness of character, and genuine piety, won him universal confidence ; this extended up the river through the medium of various business relations. Herr von Lersner and his friend, being advised by an intelligent physician, resolved to send for the successful oculist, although a Frankfort merchant, in whose case the cure had failed, earnestly endeavored to dissuade. But what was a single case against so many which had been successful ! So Jung came, enticed moreover by a handsome remuneration, which heretofore he had been accustomed to renounce ; he came, to increase his reputation, confident and cheerful, and we congratulated ourselves on the prospect of such a brave and lively table-companion.

After several medical preparations, the cataract upon both eyes was finally couched ; we were at the height of expectation ; it was said that the patient saw the moment after the operation, until the bandage again shut out the light. But it was remarked that Jung was not cheerful, and that something weighed upon his heart ; and indeed on further inquiry he confessed to me his anxiety about the result of the operation. Commonly in such cases, and I had witnessed them myself several times in Strassburg, nothing in the world seemed easier ; for he had operated successfully a hundred times. After piercing the insensible cornea, which gave no pain, the dull lens sprang forward of itself at the slightest pressure ; the patient immediately saw objects, and only had to wait with bandaged eyes, until the completed cure allowed him to use the precious organ at his own will and convenience. How many a poor man, for whom Jung had procured this happiness, had invoked God's blessing and a heavenly reward upon the benefactor, which would now be realized through this rich man !

Jung confessed that this time it had not gone off so easily and so successfully ; the lens had not sprung forward, he had been obliged to draw it out, and indeed, since it had grown to the socket, to loosen it ; this could not be done without some violence. He now reproached himself for having operated also on the other eye. But they had firmly resolved to have both couched at the same time, and when they came in, they did not immediately

bethink themselves. Suffice it to say, the second lens did not come out of itself, but had also to be loosened and drawn out in the best way he could think of.

The pain this caused to such a benevolent, good-natured, pious man, it is impossible to describe or to unfold ; some general observations on this state of mind perhaps will be in place here.

To labor for his own moral culture, is the simplest and most practicable thing which man can propose to himself ; the impulse is inborn in him ; by human understanding and by love, he is led to this, nay forced to it, in civil life.

Stilling lived in a moral religious feeling of love ; without sympathy, without hearty response, he could not exist ; he demanded mutual attachment ; where he was not known, he was silent ; where he was only known, not loved, he was sad ; accordingly he was most at home with those well-disposed persons, who can, with some degree of convenience, in the limited and quiet circle of their calling, make a business of perfecting themselves.

These persons succeed perhaps in putting away vanity, in renouncing the pursuit of outward power, in acquiring a circumspect way of speaking, and in preserving a uniformly friendly manner towards companions and neighbors.

Frequently there is an obscure spiritual groundwork underlying all this, modified by individuality ; such persons, accidentally excited, attach great weight to their empirical career ; they consider everything a supernatural determination, in the conviction that God intervenes immediately.

In such men you see also a certain disposition to remain where they are ; they will let themselves be pushed or led ; but have a certain indecision about acting themselves. This is increased by the miscarriage of the wisest plans, as well as by the accidental success of favorably concurring and unforeseen circumstances.

Now, since an attentive manly habit of action is weakened and embittered by this way of life, the way of falling into such a condition is worthy of consideration and reflection.

The things these sympathetic persons love to talk of most, are the so called awakenings, conversions, to which we will not deny their psychological value. It is what we call in scientific and

poetic matters, insight (*aperçu*) ; the perception of a great maxim, which is always a genial operation of the mind ; we arrive at it by pure intuition, not by reflection, nor by learning, nor by tradition. Here it is the perception of the moral power, which anchors in faith, and in proud certainty delights to trust itself out upon the middle of the waves.

Such a perception gives the discoverer the greatest joy, because it points him in an original manner to the infinite ; it requires no length of time for conviction ; it leaps forth whole and perfect in a moment ; hence the quaint old French rhyme :

En peu d'heure
Dieu labeure.

Outward collisions often cause such a conversion to break out violently, and one thinks that he sees signs and wonders.

Love and confidence bound me most heartily to Stilling ; I had moreover exercised a good and happy influence on his life, and it was in accordance with his nature, to treasure up in a fine grateful heart whatever had been done for him ; but in my then course of life his intercourse neither furthered nor cheered me. I was glad to let every one construe and interpret the riddle of his days as he pleased ; but this way of ascribing, in an adventurous life, whatever good occurred to us in a reasonable way, to an immediate divine influence, seemed to me too presumptuous ; and this habit of regarding the painful consequences of the hasty acts and omissions of our own thoughtlessness or dullness, as a divine pedagogy, was what I could not get along with. I could, therefore, only listen to my good friend, but could not give him any very encouraging reply ; still I preferred to leave him undisturbed, as I did every one, in his opinion, and I have defended him since then, as well as before, when others, in the opposite extreme of worldliness, did not hesitate to wound his gentle nature. So I never allowed a roguish remark to come to his ears, made by a man who very earnestly exclaimed : " No ! indeed, if I were as intimate with God as Jung is, I would never pray to the Most High for gold, but only for wisdom and good counsel, so that I might not make so many blunders which cost gold, and draw wretched years of retribution after them."

In truth, it was no time for such jests. Several days passed away between fear and hope ; the former grew, the latter waned and vanished altogether ; the eyes of the brave patient had become inflamed, and there remained no doubt that the operation had miscarried.

The condition into which it led our friend, is past describing ; he was struggling against the deepest and worst kind of despair. For what was there that he had not lost in this case ! In the first place, the warm thanks of one restored to light—the noblest reward which a physician can enjoy ; then the confidence of so many others needing help ; then his worldly credit, while the interruption of his peculiar practice left his family in a helpless situation. In short, we played the sorry drama of Job through from beginning to end, since the faithful man himself took the part of the reproving friend. He would regard this calamity as the punishment of his former faults ; it seemed to him as if he had blasphemed in regarding his accidental discovery of an eye-cure as a divine call to that business ; he blamed himself for not having studied this highly important department through and through, instead of trusting superficially to luck ; what his enemies had said of him recurred to his mind ; he began to ask himself whether perhaps it was not all true ? and it pained him the more deeply when the levity of others, so dangerous when applied to a gentle nature, and still more their prejudices and vanity, began to look to him like retributions for his past life. In such moments he lost himself in thought, and however we strove to make ourselves understood, we elicited at last, only the rational and necessary conclusion—that the ways of God are unsearchable.

I should have been still more impeded in my enterprising, cheerful mood, if I had not subjected this state of mind to an earnest friendly examination, and explained it after my own way ; yet it troubled me to see my good mother so poorly rewarded for her domestic care and pains-taking, though she did not herself feel it, in her ever active equanimity. My father pained me most. It was for me that he had enlarged a strictly close and private household with a good grace ; at the table especially, where the presence of strangers attracted familiar friends and passers

through, he indulged a merry, even paradoxical conversation, in which I furnished him occasions for many a smile by all sorts of dialectic pugilism : for I had an ungodly way of disputing everything, which I carried on to that degree of obstinacy, that in every case I got the laugh upon the party, who maintained the right. This was not to be thought of in these last weeks ; for the happiest and cheerfulest events, occasioned by some successful secondary cures on the part of our friend who had been made so unhappy by the failure of his principal attempt, could not arrest his gloomy mood, and much less give it another turn.

One thing in particular amused us. A blind old beggar Jew from Isenburg, came to Frankfort in the extremity of wretchedness, where he scarcely found a lodging, scarcely the meanest food and attendance ; but his tough oriental nature helped him so well that he was in raptures to find himself healed perfectly and without the least trouble. When asked if the operation hurt him, he said, in his hyperbolical manner, " If I had a million eyes, I would let them all be operated upon, one after the other, for half a crown." On departing, he acted quite as eccentrically in the street ; he thanked the Lord in good old testament style, praised God and the wondrous man whom he had sent. And so he walked slowly on through this long thoroughfare towards the bridge. Buyers and sellers stepped out of the shops, surprised by this singular pious enthusiasm, expressing itself with such passionate fervor before all the world ; all were moved to sympathy to such a degree, that he, without asking or desiring anything, was amply furnished for his travelling expenses.

But such a lively incident could hardly be mentioned in our circle ; for though the poor wretch, in his sandy home beyond the Main, could be counted happy in his misery, still the man of wealth and dignity on this side had missed the priceless relief so confidently expected.

It was sickening, therefore, to our good Jung to receive the thousand guilders, which, being stipulated in any case, were honorably paid by the magnanimous man. This ready money was to go to liquidate, on his return, a portion of the debts, which added their weight to other unfortunate and mournful circumstances.

And so he went off inconsolable, for he saw before him the reception of an anxious wife, and the changed manner of his well-wishing parents-in-law, who, as sureties for so many obligations of the too confiding man, might consider themselves to have been sadly caught in the choice of a life-companion for their daughter. In this and that house, from this and that window, he could already foresee the sneers and taunts of those who wished him not too well when he was fortunate ; his practice interrupted by his absence, and radically shaken by this failure, troubled him extremely.

And so we took our leave of him, on our side not without all hope ; for his strong nature, sustained by faith in supernatural aid, could not but inspire a quiet and moderate confidence in his friends.

B O O K S E V E N T E E N T H .

SEVENTEENTH BOOK.

In resuming the history of my relation to Lili, I have to remember that I spent the pleasantest hours, partly in the presence of her mother, partly alone with her. They gave me credit for knowledge of the human heart, as it was called, on the strength of my writings, and in this view our conversations were morally interesting in every way.

But how could we talk of such inward matters without coming to intimate mutual disclosures? It was not long before Lili, in a quiet hour, told me the history of her youth. She had grown up in the enjoyment of all the advantages of society and worldly gratifications. She described to me her brothers, her relations, and all her nearest interests; only her mother was kept respectfully in the background.

Little weaknesses, too, were thought of; and she could not deny, that she had often remarked in herself a certain gift of attracting others to her, with which, at the same time, was united a peculiar way of letting them go again. Thus! by prattling back and forth, we came at last to the most important point, that she had exercised this gift upon me too, but had been punished for it, seeing that I, in turn, had caught her.

These confessions came out from so pure and childlike a nature, that she made me her own entirely by them.

We were now necessary to each other; but how many a day, how many an evening till far into the night, should I have had to deny myself her company, if I had not reconciled myself to seeing her in her circles! This was a source of manifold pain.

My relation to her personally was as if to a beautiful, lovely, cultivated daughter; it was like my earlier attachments, but was of a still higher kind. Of outward circumstances, how-

ever, of the meeting and mingling of social ranks, I had not thought. An irresistible longing reigned in me ; I could not be without her, nor she without me ; but in her external environment, and by the interference of individual members of her circle, how many days were spoiled, how many hours went wrong !

The history of pleasure parties which ended in mis-pleasure ; a retarding brother, with whom I was to go on some expedition, who would first stop to finish his business with the greatest deliberation, I dare say, with some malice aforethought, and thereby spoil the whole well-concerted plan ; and ever so much more of accident and disappointment, impatience and self-denial,—all these pains, which, if they should be circumstantially set forth in a romance, would certainly find sympathizing readers, I must here omit. However, to bring this merely imaginary contemplation of a living experience nearer to youthful sympathy, I may insert some songs, well known indeed, but perhaps more impressive in this connexion.

Heart, my heart, O, what hath changed thee ?
 What doth weigh on thee so sore ?
 What hath from thyself estranged thee,
 That I scarcely know thee more ?
 Gone is all which thou held dearest,
 Gone the care which thou kept nearest
 Gone thy toils and after-bliss.
 Ah ! how couldst thou come to this ?

Binds thee here her bloom so youthful,—
 That divine and lovely form,—
 That sweet look, so good and truthful,
 With an all-resistless charm ?
 If I swear no more to see her,
 If I man myself, and flee her,
 In a moment more, alack !
 Straight to her I hie me back.

She with magic net enfolds me,
 That defies my utmost skill ;
 Lovely, wanton maid—she holds me,
 Holds me fast against my will.
 In her magic ring who finds him,
 After all her ways must mind him.

Ah ! how great the change to me !
Love ! when wilt thou set me free !

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Ah ! against my will why dost thou press me  
Into scenes so bright ?  
Had I not—good youth—so much to bless me  
In the lovely night ?

In my little chamber close I found me,  
In the moon's cold beams ;  
And their quivering light fell softly round me,  
While I lay in dreams.

Dreams they were of golden hours of steady  
And unmingled joy ;  
For within my breast had I already  
Felt the lovely boy.

Is it I still, whom that gay card-table,  
'Mid so many lights,  
Meeting faces so intolerable,  
To thy side invites ?

Ah ! the Spring's fresh fields no longer cheer me,  
Flowers no sweetness bring ;  
Where thou, angel, art, all sweets are near me,  
Where thou art is Spring.

If one has read these songs over attentively to himself, or rather sung them over with feeling, a breath of the fulness of these happy hours will certainly steal over him.

But we will not take leave of that greater, glittering company, without adding some remarks ; especially for the understanding of the close of the second poem.

She, whom I was accustomed to meet in simple garb, and seldom changed, presented herself to me in all the splendor of elegant fashion, and still she was the same. Her grace, her friendliness, remained always alike ; only I might say her gift of attracting was more observable ; perhaps, because standing as she did here before many men, she found occasion to express herself with more admiration, and to exhibit herself on many sides, according as one or another approached her ; at any rate, I could not deny that these strangers were very disagreeable to me on the one hand, while on the other I would not have denied myself the pleasure for much, of witnessing her social virtues, and of seeing that she was made for a wider and more commanding sphere,

It was still the same bosom, though covered with ornament, which had opened its inmost secrets to me, and into which I could look as clearly as into my own ; they were the same lips which had so early described to me the condition in which she had grown up, in which she had spent her years. Every answering look, every accompanying smile, bespoke the concealed noble understanding, and I was myself astonished, here in the crowd, at the secret innocent concert, which had forced itself between us in the most human, the most natural way.

But with returning spring, the pleasant freedom of the country was to knit still closer these relations. Offenbach on the Main showed even then the considerable beginnings of a city, which promised to build itself up there in time. Beautiful, and for the times, splendid buildings, were already erected ; Uncle Bernard, to call him by his family title, inhabited the largest ; extensive factory buildings were adjoining ; D'Orville, a lively young man of amiable qualities, lived opposite. Contiguous gardens, terraces, stretching to the Main, and affording an open prospect in every direction over the lovely surrounding country, put both visitors and dwellers in excellent good humor. The lover could not find a more desirable place for his feelings.

I lived at the house of John André, and since I must here make mention of this man, who afterwards made himself quite widely known, I must allow myself a short digression, in order to give some idea of the state of the Opera at that time.

In Frankfort, Marchand was director of the theatre, and exerted himself in his own person to do what was possible. He was a fine, large, well-formed man, in his best years ; amiable and gentle qualities appeared to predominate in him ; his presence on the stage, therefore, was agreeable enough. He had perhaps as much voice as was needed for the execution of the musical works of that day ; accordingly he endeavored to adapt the larger and smaller French Operas.

The part of the father in Gretry's opera of "Beauty and the Beast," suited him particularly well, and his acting was quite expressive in the vision which was contrived behind the stage.

This opera, successful in its way, approached, however, the lofty style, and was calculated to excite the tenderest feelings.

On the other hand a Demon of Realism had got possession of the opera house ; operas founded upon situations and upon different trades were brought out. The huntsmen, the coopers, and I know not what else, were produced ; André chose for himself the part of the potter. He had written the poem for himself, and upon that part of the text which belonged to him, had contrived to lavish his whole musical talent.

I was lodging with him, and will only say so much as is here demanded of this ever ready poet and composer.

He was a man of an original lively talent, whose special calling was that of a mechanic and manufacturer in Offenbach ; he floated between the chapel-master and the dilettante. In the hope of meriting the former title, he toiled very earnestly to plant a firm foot in the science of music ; in the latter character he was inclined to repeat his own compositions without end.

Among the persons who showed themselves highly active in filling and enlivening the circle, the pastor Ewald should be named ; an intellectual and cheerful person in society, who understood how to carry on the studies of his office quietly by himself, as in fact he afterwards became honorably known within the province of theology ; he must be remembered as an indispensable character in that circle, quick alike of comprehension and reply.

Lili's pianoforte playing completely fettered our good André to our society ; what with instructing, overseeing, executing, there were few hours of the day or night in which he did not enter into the family life, into the social order of the day.

Bürger's " Leonore," then but newly known, and received with enthusiasm by the Germans, was composed by him ; and he was very willing to produce it, and that repeatedly.

I too, who was much in the habit of animated recitation, was always ready to declaim it ; at that time they did not get weary of the constant repetition of the same thing. When the company had their choice which of us they would rather have, the decision was often in my favor.

All this served the turn of the lovers, and prolonged their being together ; they knew no end to the thing, and between them both they easily managed to keep the good John André



continually employed, repeating his music until midnight. To the two lovers this secured a fitting and indispensable opportunity.

If we walked out very early in the morning, we found ourselves in the freshest air, but not precisely in the country. Imposing buildings, which at that time would have done honor to a city ; gardens, in parterres easily overlooked, with level flower and other ornamental beds ; a clear prospect over the river even to the opposite bank ; and frequently at an early hour an active navigation of rafts and nimble market-skiffs and canoes ; altogether a gently gliding living world, in harmony with love's tender feelings. Even the mere rippling of the waves and rustling of the reeds in a soft moving stream was highly quickening, and never failed to spread a singularly tranquillizing spell over those walking by its edge. A clear sky in the finest season of the year overarched the whole, and how pleasant the renewal in the morning of a dear society, surrounded by such scenes !

Should such a mode of life seem too loose, too trivial to the earnest reader, let him consider that between what is here presented in immediate connexion, there intervened whole days and weeks of renunciation, other engagements and occupations, and indeed most wearisome, protracted intervals.

Men and women were busily engaged in their spheres of duty. I, too, delayed not, in consideration of the present and the future, to attend to all my obligations ; and I found time enough to finish that to which my talent and my passion irresistibly impelled me.

The earliest hours of the morning I devoted to poetry ; the middle of the day belonged to worldly business, which was handled in a peculiar manner. My father, a thorough and indeed an elegant jurist, managed his own business (for the care of his own property, as well as his connexions with highly valued friends, gave him a good deal) ; and although his character as Imperial Counsellor did not allow him to practise, yet he was on hand as legal adviser to many a friend, and he signed the writings prepared by a regular advocate, each such signature bringing him in a consideration.

This activity of his had now become more lively through my presence, and I could easily remark, that he prized my talent higher than my practice, and on that account did what he could

to leave me time for my poetic studies and productions. Sure and thorough, but of slow conception and execution, he studied the Acts as secret referee, and when we came together, he would state the case, and I would work out the decision with so much readiness, that he felt the purest father's joy, and he often declared, "that if I were not of his own blood, he should envy me."

To make those matters easier, a scribe had associated himself with us whose character and individuality, if well carried out, would improve and adorn a romance. After his school-years, which had been profitably spent, and in which he became fully master of the Latin, and acquired some other useful branches, a dissipated academic life had interrupted the clear course of his days; he dragged himself along for a time in sickness and in poverty, and only succeeded to better circumstances at last by the aid of a fine hand-writing and a readiness at accounts. Employed by some advocates, he became by degrees tolerably acquainted with the formalities of legal business, and by his faithfulness and punctuality made every one he served his patron. He had laid our family also under obligations, and was always at hand in matters of law and settlement.

He also profited on his side by our continually increasing business, consisting not only of law matters, but also of various sorts of commissions, appointments, and expeditions. In the council-house he knew all the passages and windings; to both the burgomaster's audiences he had access in his way; and since he had been well acquainted, from his first entrance into office, and even during the times of his uncertain behavior, with many of the new counsellors, some of whom had but just risen to that dignity, he had acquired a certain confidence, which might be called a sort of influence. All this he knew how to turn to the profit of his patrons, and since his health compelled him to exercise his activity with moderation, you always found him ready to execute every commission or appointment with fidelity.

His appearance was not disagreeable; he was slender in person and of regular features; his manner was not obtrusive, yet not without an expression of the certainty of his conviction touching what was to be done; moreover, he was cheerful and dex-

terous in removing hindrances. He might have been full forty, and I repent me still (I may repeat it) that I have never introduced him as the main-spring in the machinery of a novel.

Hoping that my serious readers will be somewhat satisfied by what I have just related, I may venture to turn again to that bright point of time, when love and friendship showed themselves in their fairest light.

It was in the nature of such connexions that birth-days should be celebrated very carefully, joyfully, and in a great variety of ways ; in honor of the birth-day of the pastor Ewald, the following song was written :—

When met in sweet communion,  
When warmed by love and wine,  
We'll sing this song of union,  
This simple song of mine.  
The God, who first united,  
Shall keep us one for aye :  
The flame which he first lighted,  
Shall never, never die.

Since this song has been preserved until this day, and there is scarcely a bright social gathering at any festival at which it is not joyfully revived, we commend it also to those that will come after us, and to all who shall sing it or recite it we wish the same delight and inward satisfaction which we then had, when we had no thought of any wider world, but felt ourselves even in that narrow circle expanded to a world.

It will of course be expected that Lili's birth-day, which, on the 28d of June, 1775, was repeated for the seventeenth time, should have been celebrated with peculiar ceremony. She had promised to come to Offenbach at noon ; and I must confess that the friends, with a happy uniformity, had laid aside all customary compliments at this festival, and had prepared themselves only with heartfelt tokens, which were worthy of her, for her reception and entertainment.

Busied with such pleasant duties, I saw the sun go down, announcing a bright day to follow, and promising its glad beaming presence at our feast, when Lilli's brother, George, who knew not how to dissemble, came somewhat rudely into the

chamber, and unsparingly gave us to understand that our to-morrow's festival was interrupted ; he could not tell how, or why, but his sister had declared that it would be wholly impossible for her to come to Offenbach at noon that day, and take part in the intended festival ; she hoped, however, to effect the visit towards evening. She knew and felt most sensibly how unpleasant it must be to me and to our friends, but she begged me as earnestly as she could to invent something by which the unpleasant effects of this news, which she left it to me to announce, might be softened and perhaps done away ; she would give me her warmest thanks for it.

I was silent for a moment, but had soon composed myself, and, as if by heavenly inspiration, saw what was to be done. "Make haste, George!" I cried ; "tell her to make herself easy, and do her best to come towards evening ; I promise that this very disappointment shall be turned into a feast !" The boy was curious, and wanted to know how ? but this was steadfastly withheld from him, notwithstanding that he called to his aid all the arts and all the power which the brother of our beloved can presume to exercise.

No sooner had he gone, than I walked up and down in my chamber with a singular satisfaction ; and, with the glad, free feeling that here was an opportunity to show myself her servant in a brilliant manner, I stitched together several sheets of paper with beautiful silk, as was proper for an occasional poem, and hastened to write down the title :

**"SHE COMES NOT !**

"A Mournful Family Piece, which, by the sore visitation of Divine Providence, will be represented in the most natural manner on the 23d of June, 1775, at Offenbach-on-the-Maine. The action lasts from morning until evening."

Since neither original nor copy of this little joke remains by me,—I have often inquired after it, but never have found any trace of it—I must therefore compose it anew, a thing not commonly difficult.

The scene is at D'Orville's house and garden in Offenbach ;

the action opens with the domestics, in which each one plays out his special part, and the preparations for a festival are made very evident. The children intermingle, represented to the life ; then the lord and the lady, with her appropriate activity and duties ; then comes, whilst everything is in a certain hurried and business-like confusion, the indefatigable neighbor, Hans André, the composer ; he seats himself at the piano and calls all together to hear and try his new festival song, just finished. He attracts the whole house towards him, but they soon disperse to attend to pressing duties ; one is called away by another, one is in need of another, and the arrival of the gardener draws our attention to the garden and water scenes ; wreaths, bands with inscriptions in the most ornamented style, nothing is forgotten.

When they are all assembled for the pleasantest part of the matter, in steps a messenger, who, as a sort of humorous go-between, was also entitled to play a part, and having had a plenty of drink-money, could observe casually, as it were, what relations were existing. He opens his packet somewhat too obligingly, expects a glass of wine and a wheaten roll, and after some roguish hesitation hands over his despatches. The master of the house lets his arms drop, the papers fall to the floor, he calls out : " Let me go to the table ! let me go to the bureau that I may *brush*."

The spirited intercourse of vivacious persons is distinguished for a certain symbolical style of speech and gesture. A sort of gipsy-talk springs up between them, which, while it makes the initiated very happy, is unobserved by the stranger, or, if observed, is disagreeable.

Among Lili's most pleasing peculiarities was the one which is here expressed by the word *brushing*, and which manifested itself whenever anything offensive was said or told, especially when she sat at table, or chanced to be near any flat surface.

This had its origin in an infinitely fascinating trick, which she once played off when a stranger, sitting near her at table, brought forward something unseemly. Without altering her mild countenance, she brushed with her right hand, most prettily, across the table-cloth, and shoved off everything she reached with this gentle motion deliberately on to the floor. I know not what all,

knives, forks, bread, salt-cellar, and something also belonging to her neighbor; every one was frightened; the servants ran up, and no one knew what it all meant, except the observing ones, who were delighted that she had rebuked and extinguished an impropriety in such an elegant manner.

Here now was a symbol found to express the repulsion of anything disagreeable, which still is frequently made use of in talented, brave, estimable, well-meaning, but not thoroughly cultivated company. We all accepted the motion of the right hand as a sign of rejection; the actual stroking or brushing away of objects was a thing which she indulged in afterwards only moderately and with good taste.

When, therefore, the poet makes the master of the house feel this desire for brushing, a sort of mimicry which had become with us a second nature, its significance, its efficacy, are at once apparent; for while he threatens to sweep everything off from all flat surfaces, everything hinders him; they try in vain to quiet him, till finally he throws himself exhausted onto a seat.

"What has happened?" all exclaim. "Is she sick? Is any one dead?" "Read! read!" cries D'Orville, "there it lies on the ground." The letter was picked up; they read it, and exclaimed: *She comes not!*

The great terror had prepared them for a greater;—but she was well—nothing had happened to her! no one of the family was injured; hope remained for the evening.

André, who meanwhile had kept on with his music, came running up at last, consoling and seeking consolation. Pastor Ewald and his wife came in quite characteristically, disappointed and yet reasonable, sorry to renounce and yet quietly accepting all for the best. Everything went on in perfect medley, until the exemplary, calm, uncle Bernard finally drew nigh, expecting a good breakfast and a commendable dinner; and he is the only one who sees the matter from the right point of view; he makes helpful, reasonable speeches, and restores all to an equilibrium, just as in the Greek tragedy a god knows how to clear up the confusion of the greatest heroes with a few words.

All this was written down during a part of the night with running pen, and given to a messenger, who was instructed to

deliver it the next morning in Offenbach, precisely at ten o'clock.

I awoke, finding it one of the clearest mornings, and purposed and contrived it to arrive at Offenbach precisely at noon.

I was received with the queerest charivari of responses ; the interrupted feast was scarcely heard of ; they scolded and berated me, because I had taken them off so finely. The domestics were contented with being introduced upon the same stage with their superiors ; only the children, those most decided and indomitable little realists, obstinately insisted that they had not talked so, and that everything in fact went quite differently from the way in which it here stood written. I appeased them by some foretastes of the supper-table, and they loved me as much as ever. A happy dinner, a moderation of all the festivities, put us in the mood of receiving Lilli without splendor, but yet perhaps all the more heartily. She came, and was welcomed by cheerful, in fact, by enthusiastic faces, surprised to find that her staying away permitted so much cheerfulness. They told her everything, they laid the whole thing before her, and she, in her dear sweet way, thanked me as she only could.

It required no remarkable shrewdness to perceive, that her staying away from the festival in her honor was not accidental, but had been caused by gossiping as of the relation between us. Meanwhile this did not have the slightest influence either on our sentiments or our behavior.

At this season of the year there could not fail to be a thronging of varied society from the city. Frequently I did not enter the company until late in the evening, when I found her apparently sympathizing ; and since I commonly appeared only for a few hours, I was glad of an opportunity to be useful to her in some way, and to undertake some greater or smaller commission in her behalf. And indeed this service is the most delightful which can befall a man, as the old chivalry-romances know how to intimate in their obscure, but powerful manner. That she ruled over me, was not to be concealed, and she might well be proud of it ; for here the victor and the vanquished triumph, and enjoy an equal pride.

My repeated, although brief coöperation in these parties, was

always so much the more effective. John André always had some musical arrangements on hand ; and I brought in some new thing of others or my own ; so that poetical and musical blossoms rained down upon us. It was altogether a brilliant time ; a certain exaltation reigned in the company, and there were no insipid moments. The others sympathized in the relation between us two, without further question. For where inclination and passion come out in their own bold nature, they give courage to shy souls, who henceforth cannot comprehend why they should conceal their equally good rights. Assurance, therefore, was given to more or less smothered relations, which now intertwined themselves without reserve ; others, which did not confess themselves so openly, still glided on agreeably beneath the shade.

If I could not, because of multifarious business, pass the days out there with her, yet the clear evenings gave us opportunity for prolonged meetings in the open air. Loving souls will be pleased with the following event.

It was a condition of which it stands written : " I sleep, but my heart wakes ; " the bright and dark hours were alike ; the light of day could not outshine the light of love, and the night was made noon by the radiance of passion.

We had been walking round under the clearest starlight in the open country till it was quite late ; and after I had accompanied her and her friends from door to door, home, and finally had taken leave of her, I felt so little like sleep that I did not hesitate to set off on another ramble. I took the highway to Frankfort, so as to give myself up to my thoughts and hopes ; I seated myself on a bench, in the pure still night, under the gleaming starry heavens, where I belonged only to myself and her.

My attention was attracted by a sound quite near me, which I could not explain ; it was not a rattling, nor a rustling, and on closer observation I discovered that it was under the ground, and the working of some little animal. It might be a hedge-hog, or a weasel, or whatever creature labors at such hours.

I had reached the city again and arrived at the Röderberg, when I recognised, by their chalk-white gleam, the steps which



lead up to the vineyards. I mounted, sat myself down, and fell asleep.

When I awoke, the twilight had already been spread abroad, and I found myself opposite the high wall, which in earlier times had been erected as a defence against the heights. Saxenhausen lay before me, light mists pointed out the course of the river ; it was cool, and to me most welcome.

There I waited till the sun, rising gradually behind me, lighted up the opposite landscape. It was the country in which I should again see my beloved, and I returned slowly back to the paradise which surrounded her, yet sleeping.

On account of my growing circle of business, which I for love's sake was anxious to extend and to control, my visits to Offenbach became more sparing, which placed me in a somewhat painful predicament ; yet it may be remarked how willingly one postpones and loses the present for the sake of the future.

As my prospects were now gradually improving, I took them to be more significant than they really were, and I thought the more about a speedy decision, since so public a connexion could not go on much longer without some discontent. And as is usual in such cases, we did not expressly say the thing to one another ; but the feeling of a mutual unconditional satisfaction, the full conviction that a separation was impossible, the confidence reposed in one another,—all this produced such a seriousness, that I, who had firmly resolved never to get involved again in any troublesome connexion, and who found myself, nevertheless, engaged in this, without the certainty of a favorable result, was actually beset with heaviness of mind, to get rid of which I implicated myself more and more in indifferent worldly affairs, that promised me no profit nor contentment without the hand of my beloved.

In this strange situation, the like of which many have no doubt experienced with pain, there came to our aid a family friend, who saw through characters and situations very clearly. Her name was Delf ; she presided with her older sister over a little shop in Heidelberg, and on several occasions had received many favors from the great Frankfort banking establishment. She had known and loved Lili from her youth up ; she was a person of great individuality, of an earnest, manly look, and an even,

downright hasty step. She had had peculiar reason to adapt herself to the world, and she understood it, in a certain sense at least. She could not be called intriguing ; she was accustomed to look long at relations, and to carry out her plans in silence : but then she had the gift to see an opportunity, and when she found the minds of persons wavering betwixt doubt and resolution, when everything depended upon decision, she knew how to put such a force of character into it, that she did not easily fail of accomplishing her purpose. She was peculiarly free from selfish ends ; to have done anything, to have completed anything, especially to have brought about a marriage, was reward enough for her. She had long since seen through our position, and investigated the matter in repeated visits, so that she had finally convinced herself that this attachment must be favored ; that these plans, honestly but not efficiently taken in hand and prosecuted, must be supported, and this little romance be brought to a close as speedily as possible.

For many years she had enjoyed the confidence of Lili's mother. Introduced by me into my house, she had managed to make herself agreeable to my parents ; for just this rough sort of manner in an imperial city is not offensive, and backed by understanding, is even welcome. She knew very well our wishes and our hopes ; her love of activity impelled her to the charge ; in short she had a conversation with the parents. How she commenced it, how she put aside the difficulties which might have stood in her way, I know not ; but she came to us one evening bringing their consent. "Take each other by the hand !" cried she, in her pathetic yet commanding manner. I stood opposite to Lili and offered her my hand ; she, not hesitatingly indeed, but slowly, placed hers in it, and after a long and deep breath we fell with lively emotion into each other's arms.

It was a strange decree of the o'erruling Providence, that I, in the course of my singular history, should also have experienced the feelings of a bridegroom.

I may venture to assert, that for a well bred man it is the pleasantest of all recollections. It is delightful to recall those feelings, which are with difficulty expressed or even explained. The old condition is entirely changed ; the worst antagonisms

are removed, the most inveterate differences are adjusted ; prompting nature, and ever warning reason, the tyrannizing impulses and the reflecting law, which before kept up a perpetual strife within us, all these now approached in friendly unity, and at the general holy feast, what was forbidden is commanded, and what was penal is raised to a duty not to be neglected.

The reader will learn approvingly that from this time forward a certain alteration took place in my feelings. If the beloved hitherto had come before me beautiful, graceful, and attractive, now she appeared to me a being of superior worth and significance. She was a double person : her grace and loveliness belonged to me,—that I felt as formerly ; but the dignity of her character, her certainty in herself, her reliableness in all things, remained her own. I beheld it, I looked through it, I was delighted with it as with a capital of which I should enjoy the income as long as I lived.

There is depth and significance in the old remark : on the summit of fortune one abides not long. The consent of the parents on both sides, so adroitly conquered by *Demoiselle Delf*, was now recognised as in full force, though silently and without further formality. For as soon as anything so ideal as a betrothal is commonly considered, becomes actual, as soon as we believe the thing quite settled, there comes a crisis. The outward world is utterly unmerciful, and it has reason, for it must maintain its authority at all costs ; the confidence of passion is great, and yet we see it often wrecked upon the rocks of opposing actualities. A young married couple who enter this state unprovided with sufficient means, especially in these latter times, can promise themselves no honey-moon ; immediately the world threatens them with incompatible demands, which, if not satisfied, make the young pair appear absurd.

Of the insufficiency of the means which I had anxiously scraped together to attain my end, I had not been before aware, because they had held out up to a certain point ; but now that end was drawing nearer, I saw there would not be enough to make both sides meet.

The fallacy, which passion finds so convenient, now presented itself, in all its inconsistency. My house, my domestic circum-

stances, in all their details, had to be considered with some soberness. The consciousness, that his house would one day contain a daughter-in-law, lay indeed at the bottom of the original design ; but then what sort of a lady did it contemplate ?

We have already, at the end of the last volume, made acquaintance with the gentle, lovely, intelligent, beautiful, and capable maiden, so always like herself, so affectionate, and yet so free from passion ; she was a fitting key-stone to the arch which had been building. But here, upon calm and candid consideration of the matter, it could not be denied that, in order to establish the newly won in such a function, a new arch would have to be built !

Meanwhile, this had not yet become clear to me ; and as little was it so to her. When I thought of myself now in my house, and imagined myself leading her into it, she did not seem to me to suit it ; just as I, formerly, before appearing in her circles, in order not to offend the men of fashion and the day, was obliged to change my dress from time to time. But this could not be done so easily in the construction of a habitation, where, in the rebuilding of a stately burgher-house, the now antiquated style of construction demanded, of course, a more antiquated ornament.

Moreover, even after their consent was gained, it had not been possible to establish any relations between the parents,—any family intercourse. Different religious customs, different manners ! and if the lovely lady had wished to continue in any way her mode of life, she would have found no opportunity, no room in the respectably large house.

If I had looked away from all this until now, I was quieted and strengthened by the opening of fine prospects from without, of acquiring some profitable situation. An active spirit gets a foothold everywhere : capacities, talents create confidence ; every one thinks a change of direction to be all that is needed. The earnestness of youth finds favor, genius is trusted for everything, though its power be only of a certain kind.

The intellectual and literary domain of Germany at that time may be regarded as but newly broken ground. Among the business people there were prudent men, who desired skilful cultiva-

tors and prudent managers for the fields about to be turned up. Even the respectable and well founded Free-Mason's lodge, with the most distinguished members of which I had become acquainted through my relation to Lili, sought to make my neighborhood available ; but I, from a feeling of independence, which afterwards appeared to me a madness, declined all closer connexion, not perceiving that these men, although pledged to one another in a higher sense, would yet do much to further my own ends, so nearly related to theirs.

I return to more personal matters.

In such cities as Frankfort, there are collective situations : residences, agencies, which by activity may be indefinitely extended. Something of this sort presented itself to me now, which at first sight seemed both advantageous and honorable. They assumed that I would suit the place ; and it would have done among the services of the Chancery triad described. We are silent about our doubts ; we only impart what is favorable ; by powerful activity we overcome all wavering ; whence there results a something untrue in our position, without the force of passion being in the least subdued.

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In times of peace there is no more interesting reading for the multitude than the public papers, which give us speedy information of the latest doings in the world. The quiet and safe citizen exercises thus in an innocent way his party spirit, which in our limitation we neither can nor should get rid of. Every comfortable person gets up then a factitious interest, as in a wager, experiences an unreal gain or loss, and, as in the theatre, takes a very lively, though imaginary part, in others' good or evil fortune. This sympathy seems often arbitrary, and yet it rests on moral grounds. For now we give to praiseworthy purposes the applause they deserve ; and now again, carried away by brilliant consequences, we turn to those whose purposes we should have blamed. For all this we had rich material in those times.

Frederic the Second, resting on his power, seemed still constantly to weigh the fate of Europe and the world ; Catharine, a

great woman, who had proved herself worthy of the throne, gave great sphere for action to enterprising and highly favored men, in continually extending the dominion of their Empress ; and since this took place against the Turks, whom we are in the habit of richly repaying for the contempt with which they look down upon us, it seemed as if it was no sacrifice of men to slay these enemies of Christendom by thousands. The burning of the fleet in the harbor of Tschesme caused a universal festival of joy throughout the civilized world, and every one partook of the victorious exultation, when, in order to preserve a faithful image of that great event, in aid of an artistic study, a ship of war was actually blown up on the roads of Livorno. Not long after, a young northern king, also by his own authority, seized the reins of government. The aristocrats whom he oppressed were not lamented, for aristocracy finds no favor with the public, since it is its nature to work in silence, and it is the more secure the less talk it creates about itself ; and in this case they thought all the better of the young king, since he, in order to counterbalance the highest ranks, was obliged to favor the lower and bind them to himself.

The world was still more deeply interested, when a whole people looked resolved to effect their independence. Already before this had there been a welcome spectacle of the same thing in little ; for a long time Corsica had been the point to which all eyes were directed ; Paoli, when no longer in a condition to carry through his patriotic purpose, passed through Germany to England, and drew to himself the hearts of all ; he was a fine, slender, light-complexioned man, full of grace and friendliness. I saw him in the house of Bethmann, where he stopped a short time, and met with cheerful cordiality the curious visitors who thronged to him. But now the same events were to be repeated in a remoter quarter of the globe ; we wished the Americans all success, and the names of Franklin and Washington began to shine and sparkle in the political and warlike firmament. Much had been accomplished to improve the condition of humanity, and now when a new and well-meaning king of France evinced the best intentions of doing away a multitude of abuses and of limiting himself to the noblest ends, of introducing a regular

and efficient system of political economy, of dispensing with all arbitrary power and of ruling by order as by right alone ; the brightest hope spread over the world, and youth most confidently promised itself and the race a fair and a majestic future.

In all these events, however, I took part only so far as they interested society in general ; my immediate circle did not occupy themselves with the news of the day ; we were chiefly concerned in the study of men ; but we let men have their way.

The quiet position of the German Fatherland, to which also my native city had conformed now for over a hundred years, had been fully preserved in spite of many wars and convulsions. It was favorable to a certain general comfort, that from the highest to the lowest, from the emperor down to the Jews, the most varied gradation, instead of separating persons, only seemed to bind them the more closely together. If the kings stood in a subordinate position to the emperor, yet their elective right, and the immunities secured to them thereby, quite enabled them to preserve the balance. Moreover, the high nobility were limited to the first royal circle, so that in view of their distinguished claims, they could consider themselves born equal with the highest, and even above them in a certain sense, since the spiritual Electors took precedence of all the others, and, as offshoots of the hierarchy, maintained an honorable and uncontested place.

Think now of the extraordinary advantages which these old established families have enjoyed, particularly in foundations, orders of knighthood, ministries, unions, and brotherhoods, and you will easily conceive that this great mass of important men, feeling themselves at once subordinated and co-ordinated, passed their days in the highest contentment and in a regular round of affairs, and thus without any especial pains they prepared and transmitted an equal degree of comfort to their posterity. Nor was this class deficient in intellectual culture ; for already the high military and business training of a century past had shown itself very decidedly in the whole noble, as well as diplomatic circle ; and at the same time through literature and philosophy it had won many minds, and raised them to a lofty stand-point not too favorable to the existing state of things.

In Germany it had scarcely occurred to any one to look with

envy on that monstrous privileged class, or to grudge its fortunate advantages. The middle class had devoted themselves to the undisturbed pursuit of trade and science, and by these means, as well as by the mechanic arts, so closely related to them, had raised themselves to the position of an important counterpoise; the free or half-free cities favored this activity, while the individuals felt a certain quiet satisfaction in it. The man who saw his wealth increasing, and his intellectual activity, especially in matters of law or state, enhanced, could everywhere enjoy a significant influence. If in the Supreme Courts of the empire, and indeed elsewhere, a learned bench was placed opposite to the noble bench; the freer and more comprehensive views of the one kept on friendly terms with the deeper insight of the other, and through their whole lives there was no trace of rivalry; the nobility was secure in its unreachable and time-hallowed privileges, and the burgher felt it beneath his dignity to strive for a semblance of them by a mere prefix to his name. The merchant, the mechanic, had enough to do to keep pace with the swift progress of the nations. Leaving out of the account the usual fluctuations of the day, we may certainly say that it was on the whole a time of pure striving, such as could not have appeared before, and such as could not long continue after so much outward and inward elevation had been realized.

My position towards the higher classes at this time was very favorable. In *Werther*, to be sure, the disagreeable circumstances which exist upon the boundary between two distinct positions were expressed with some impatience; but this was allowed to pass in consideration of the generally passionate character of the book, since every one felt that it had no reference to any immediate action.

Through *Götz von Berlichingen*, however, I stood quite well with the upper classes; whatever improprieties my earlier literature had been guilty of, here I had represented in a learned and happy manner the old German constitution, the inviolable emperor at the head, with many other degrees, and a knight who, in a time of general lawlessness, had determined as a private man to act, if not lawfully, at least uprightly, and fell into a very sorry predicament by the means. This complicated story, however,



was not snatched from the air ; its style was bright and lively, and consequently here and there a little modern, but it was substantially as the brave and capable man had set it down, with tolerable success, in his own narrative.

The family still flourished ; its relation to the Frankish knight-hood remained in all its integrity, although that relation, like many others at that time, might have grown somewhat faint and ineffectual.

Now all at once the little stream of Jaxt, and the castle of Jaxthausen, acquired a poetical importance ; they were visited, as well as the council-house at Heilbronn.

It was known that I had other points of that historical period in mind, and many a family, which dated back to that time, had the prospect of seeing its ancestors brought to light in the same way.

A singular general satisfaction is felt, when any one recalls a nation's history to its recollection in a happy manner ; men enjoy the virtues of their ancestors and smile at their failings, which they believe themselves to have long since overcome. Such a representation cannot fail to meet with sympathy and applause, and I had much to enjoy in this sense.

Yet it may be worth while to observe, in the numerous advances which were made to me, in the multitude of young persons who attached themselves to me, there was found no nobleman ; on the other hand there were many, already arrived at the age of thirty, who sought me and visited me, and their willing and striving were pervaded by a joyful hope of earnestly developing themselves in a patriotic and more universal and humane sense.

At this time especially there was a very lively interest in the epoch between the fifteenth and the sixteenth century. The works of ULRICH VON HUTTEN came into my hands, and it seemed strange enough that something so similar to what then took place, should manifest itself here again in our later days.

The following letter of Ulrich von Hutten to Billibald Pyrkheymer, may find a suitable place here :—

“ What fortune has given us, it generally takes away again ; and not only that—everything else which attaches itself to man

from without, we see, is subjected to accident. But now I strive for honor, which I should wish to obtain without envy, in whatsoever way ; for there possesses me a fiery thirst for glory, so that I wish as far as possible to be ennobled. I should make a very mean figure, dear Billibald, if I should hold myself for a nobleman now, although I was born in this rank, this family and of such ancestors, if I had not ennobled myself by my own exertion. So great a work have I in my mind ! I aim higher ! not to see myself promoted to a more distinguished and more brilliant rank ; but I would fain seek a fountain out of which I may draw a peculiar nobility, and not be counted among the factitious nobility, contented with what I have received from my ancestors ; I would add to those goods something of my own, which may pass over from me to my posterity.

“Therefore, in my studies and my efforts, I proceed contrary to the opinion of those who esteem what actually exists enough ; for to me nothing of that sort is enough, as I have already confessed to you my ambition in this matter. And I here declare, that I do not envy those who, proceeding from the lowest stations, have climbed above my own position ; and on this point I by no means agree with the men of my own rank, who are wont to sneer at persons of a lower origin, who have raised themselves by their own talent. For they with perfect right are preferred to us, who have seized for themselves and taken into possession the material of glory, which we have neglected ; they may be the sons of fullers or of tanners, but they have known how to wrestle with greater difficulties than we have. Not only is the ignorant man, who envies him who has distinguished himself by knowledge, a fool, but he is to be reckoned among the miserable—indeed, among the most miserable ; and with this fault are our nobility especially diseased, that they look with an evil eye upon such accomplishments. For what, in God’s name ! is it to every one who possesses that which we have neglected ? Why have we not applied ourselves to the law ? why have we not ourselves learned this beautiful lore, these finest arts ? And now fullers, shoemakers and wheelwrights go before us. Why have we forsaken our post, why left the most liberal studies to hired servants and (shamefully for us !) their smut ? Most justly has every

dexterous and industrious person been able to take into his possession, and by his activity to render useful, the inheritance of the nobility which we despised. Wretched beings that we are, who neglect that which is enough to raise the humblest individual above us; let us cease to envy, and strive also to obtain what others, to our deep disgrace, have arrogated to themselves.

“Every longing for glory is honorable; all striving for the excellent, praiseworthy. To every rank may its own honor remain, may its own ornament be secured to it! Those ancestral images I will not despise any more than I would the richly endowed pedigree; but whatever may be their worth, it is not our own, unless we by our merits make it ours; nor can it endure, unless the nobility adopt the manners which become them. In vain will yonder fat and corpulent housekeeper show you the images of his ancestors, whilst he himself, inactive, rather resembles a clod than those, the light of whose excellence has gone before him.

“So much have I wished most fully and most frankly to confide to you respecting my ambition and my nature.”

If not in such a train of connexion, yet I had to hear the same excellent and strong sentiments from my more distinguished friends and acquaintances, of which the results appeared in an honest activity. It had become a creed, that one must earn for himself a personal nobility, and if any rivalry appeared in those fine days, it was from above downwards.

We others, on the contrary, had what we wished; the free and approved exercise of the talents lent to us by nature, as far as could consist with all our civil relations.

For my native city had in this a very peculiar situation, and one which has not been enough considered. While the northern free imperial cities were based upon an extended commerce, and the southern, retrograding in commercial importance, stood more upon art and manufactures; in Frankfort-on-the-Maine a certain complex character might be remarked, which seemed to be woven together out of trade, capital, real estate, and the passion for knowing and collecting.

The Lutheran Confession controlled the government. The old *Gan-inheritance*, deriving its name from the house of Lim-

burg ; the house of Frauenstein, originally only a club, faithful to the side of intelligence, during the commotions brought on by the lower classes ; the jurist, and others well to do and well disposed—no one was excluded from the magistracy ; even those mechanics, who had upheld the established order at a critical time, were eligible to the council, provided they were stationary in their place. The other constitutional counterpoises, formal appointments, and whatever else attaches to such a constitution, gave sphere of action to many men ; while trade and manufacture, in so favorable a location, found no obstacle to their extension.

The higher nobility worked on by itself, unenvied and almost unnoticed ; a second class pressing close upon it must already have been more active ; and resting upon old wealthy family foundations, it sought to distinguish itself by political and legal learning.

The so-called Reformists composed, like the refugees in other places, a distinguished class, and even when they rode out in fine equipages on Sundays to their service in Bockenheim, it was always a sort of triumph over the citizen's party, who are entitled to go to church on foot in good weather and in bad.

The Catholics were scarcely noticed ; but all those advantages were secured to them, which the other two confessions had appropriated to themselves.



# BOOK EIGHTEENTH.



## EIGHTEENTH BOOK.

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RETURNING now to literary matters, I must give prominence to a circumstance which had a great influence upon the German poetry of that period, and which is especially worthy of remark, since this influence has lasted through the whole course of our poetic art to the present day, and cannot be lost even in the future.

From the oldest times, the Germans were accustomed to rhyme ; it brought with it this advantage, that they could proceed in a very naïve manner, scarcely troubling themselves to do more than count the syllables. If with the progress of culture they began instinctively to pay more or less attention also to the sense and signification of the syllables, they deserved praise, which many poets knew how to arrogate to themselves. The rhyme marked the close of the poetical proposition ; the smaller divisions were indicated by shorter lines, and a naturally refined ear cared for alternation and grace. But now all at once they took rhyme away, without considering that the value of the syllables was not yet decided, indeed that it was a difficult thing to decide. Klopstock took the lead. How earnestly he toiled and what he has accomplished is well known. Every one felt the uncertainty of the thing, they did not like to run the risk, and led on by natural tendency, they snatched at a poetic prose. Gessner's extremely lovely Idylls opened an endless path. Klopstock wrote the dialogue of Hermann's Fight in prose, as well as the Death of Adam. Through the civil tragedies as well as the more classic drama, a style more lofty and more full of feeling gained possession of the theatre ; while on the other hand the five feet Iambic verse, which had been spread among us through the influence of the English, was reducing poesy to



prose. But in general the demand for rhythm and for rhyme could not be given up. Ramler, though proceeding from uncertain principles, strict always in his own case, could not help exercising the same severity upon others' works. He transformed prose into verse, altered and improved the labor of others, by which means he earned little thanks and only confused the matter more. Those succeeded best, who conformed to the traditional rhyme with a certain observance of the worth of syllables, and who, guided by natural taste, observed unexpressed and undetermined laws ; as for example Wieland, who, although inimitable, for a long time served more moderate talents for a model.

But the practice remained uncertain in any case, and there was no one, even the best, who was not for the moment led astray. Hence the misfortune, that the peculiarly genial epoch of our poetry produced little which could be called correct in its kind ; for here also the time was stirring, exacting, active, but not reflective and self-satisfying.

In order, however, to find a poetic footing, to discover an element in which they could breathe freely, they had gone back some centuries, to where earnest talents shone aloft amid a chaotic state of things, and made friends with the poetic art of those times. The Minnesingers lay too far from us ; it would have been necessary to study the language first, and that was not our business, we wanted to live and not to learn.

Hans Sachs, the really masterly poet, lay the nearest to us. A true talent, not like those knights and courtiers indeed, but a plain citizen, as we also boasted ourselves to be. A didactic realism spoke to us, and we made use of the easy rhythm, of the readily occurring rhyme, on many occasions. This manner seemed so convenient to the poetry of the day, and we needed it every hour.

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If important works, which required the attention and labor of a year or a whole life, were built upon such hazardous grounds, on more or less trivial occasions, it may be imagined how mischievously at the same time other ephemeral productions formed

themselves ; for example the poetical epistles, parables, and invectives of all forms, with which we proceeded to make war within ourselves, and to seek business abroad.

Besides what has already been printed, but little of this survives ; it may be laid up somewhere. Short notices serve sometimes to make the origin and purposes of thinking men more clear. Persons of more than ordinary penetration, to whose sight these things may come hereafter, will favorably remark that at the bottom of all such eccentricities there was an honest effort. Upright purpose strives with presumption, nature against conventionalities, talent against forms, genius with itself, power against weakness, undeveloped capacity against developed mediocrity, so that that whole proceeding may be regarded as a skirmish which follows a declaration of war, and announces a violent contest. For, strictly considered, the contest in these fifty years is not yet fought out, and it is continually going on, only in a higher region.

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I had, in imitation of an old German puppet-show play, invented a whimsical piece of nonsense, which was to bear the title of (Hanswurst's) *Jack-Pudding's Wedding*. The scheme was as follows : Hanswurst, a rich young farmer and an orphan, who has just come of age, wants to marry a rich maiden, by the name of Ursel Blandine. His guardian, Kilian Brustfleck (*Leather-apron*), and her mother Ursel, are highly pleased with it. Their long cherished plan, their highest wishes were thereby reached and fulfilled at last. There is not the slightest hindrance in the way, and the whole rests peculiarly upon this, that the longing of the young people to possess each other is restrained by the arrangements for the wedding, and the unavoidable circumstantialities of such an occasion. As prologue, comes in the inviter to the nuptials, who proclaims the banns after the traditional fashion, and ends with these rhymes :

The wedding feast is at the house  
Of mine host of the Golden Louse.

To obviate the charge of violating the unity of place, the aforesaid tavern was to be seen in the background of the theatre, glittering with its insignia ; but so that all its four sides should be represented, as if it turned upon a peg ; in conformity with which the front scenes of the stage had to undergo suitable changes.

In the first Act the front side of the house upon the street was turned to the audience, with the golden insignia magnified as it were by a solar microscope ; in the second act, the side towards the garden ; the third, towards a little wood ; the fourth, towards a neighboring lake ; from which it was predicted that in a short time the decorator would have little difficulty in carrying a wave over the whole stage, clear to the prompter's box.

But through all this the peculiar interest of the piece is not yet expressed ; for the principal joke was carried even to madness, in the fact that the whole *dramatis personæ* consisted of mere traditional German nick-names, by which the characters of the individuals were at once brought out, and their relation to one another given.

Since we may hope that this will be read in good society, perhaps in decent family circles, we need not, after the custom of every theatre bill, name over our persons here in order, nor produce the passages in which they showed themselves most prominent ; although funny, roguish, broad allusions, and witty jokes, must have arisen in the simplest way. We add one leaf as a specimen, leaving our editors the liberty of excluding it if they see fit.

Uncle Scrub (*Schuft*), through his relationship to the family, was entitled to an invitation to the feast ; no one had anything to say against it ; for though he was utterly good for nothing in his life, yet he was there, and since he was there, they could not with propriety refuse him ; and on such a feast-day they were not to remember that they had sometimes had reason to be dissatisfied with him.

With Master Knave (*Schurke*), it was a most serious case ; he had been useful to the family, although not without an eye to his own profit ; on the other hand again he had injured it, perhaps to his own advantage ; perhaps, too, because he found it convenient.

The more or less prudent ones voted for his admission ; the few who would have excluded him, were voted down.

But there was a third person, about whom it was still more difficult to decide ; an orderly man in society, condescending, agreeable, useful in many ways, not less than others ; he had the single failing, that he could not bear his name mentioned, and as soon as he heard it was transported into a heroic fury, such as the Northmen call *Berserker-rage*, threatened to kill all right and left, and in such a *raptus* hurting others and receiving hurt ; and indeed the second act of the piece was brought, through him, to a very confused ending.

Here was an occasion, which could not be allowed to pass, for chastising the piratical publisher Macklot. That is, he is going to stop with his own *Macklotish* tribe (*Maklotur*), and when he hears of the preparations for the wedding, he cannot resist the impulse to snuff an invitation and to refresh his hungry stomach at other people's expense. He announces himself ; Kilian Leather-apron inquires into his claims, but is obliged to refuse him, since it is understood that all the guests are well known public characters, to which recommendation the applicant can make no claim. Macklot does his best to show, that he is as renowned as any of them. But when Kilian Leather-apron, as a strict master of ceremonies, remains immovable, the nameless person, who has recovered from his Berserker-rage at the end of the second act, espouses the cause of his near relative, the book-pirate, so pressingly, that he is finally admitted among the other guests.

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About this time the COUNTS STALBERG announced themselves ; they were proposing a journey to Switzerland, and wished to make us a visit. Through the earliest dawning of my talent in the Göttingen *Musen Almanach*, I had entered into friendly relations with them, and with other young men whose characters and labors are well known. At that time they entertained rather strange ideas of friendship and love. It was simply the lively companionship of youth, each opening himself to the other, and revealing what was in him, full of talent it might be, but yet un-

formed. Such a mutual relation, which seemed indeed like confidence, they took for love, for genuine attraction ; I deceived myself in this as well as others, and have suffered from it many years in more than one way. There is still in existence a letter of Bürger's about that time, from which it may be seen that there was no discussion of the moral æsthetic among these companions. Every one felt himself excited, and thought he had nothing to do but to act and to make poetry accordingly.

The brothers arrived, Count Haugwitz with them. They were received by me with open breast, with kindly propriety. They lodged at the hotel, but they were generally with us at table. The first lively meeting proved highly gratifying ; but eccentricities soon manifested themselves.

A singular position shaped itself for my mother. In her lively, frank way, she could carry herself back to the middle age at once, to take the part of Aja with some Lombard or Byzantian princess. She was called nothing else but Aja, and she pleased herself with the joke, and entered the more heartily into the fantasies of youth, as she believed she saw her own type in the housekeeper of Götz von Berlichingen.

But this could not last long ; for we had dined together but a few times, enjoying one glass of wine after another, when the poetic hatred for tyrants came out, and they could not conceal a thirsting for the blood of such villains. My father smiled and shook his head ; my mother had scarcely heard of a tyrant in her life, but she recollected having seen the copper-plate engraving of such a monster in Gottfried's Chronicles : king Cambyzes, who triumphed in the presence of a father at having hit the heart of his little son with an arrow ; this still stood in her memory. To give a more cheerful turn to these and similar expressions which continually grew more painful, she betook herself to her cellar, where her oldest wines lay carefully preserved in large casks. There was to be found no less a thing than the brands of the year 1706, '19, '26 and '48, of her own making and keeping, and seldom broached except on solemn festive occasions.

As she decanted the rich colored wine into the polished flagon, she exclaimed : " Here is the true tyrant's blood ! Glut

yourselves with this, but leave all murderous thoughts outside of my house !

“ Yes, tyrants’ blood indeed !” I cried ; “ no greater tyrant is there than the one whose heart’s blood is here set before you. Bathe yourselves in it ; but with moderation ! for you must fear lest he subdue you by his liveliness and good relish. The vine is the universal tyrant, who ought to be rooted up ; we should therefore choose and reverence as a patron the holy Lycurgus, the Thracian ; he set about the pious work in earnest, but, blinded and corrupted by the infatuating demon Bacchus, deserves to stand high only in the army of martyrs.

“ This vine-stock is the very vilest tyrant, at once a flatterer, a swindler, and a robber. You relish the first draughts of his blood, but one drop entices another after it incessantly ; they succeed each other like a necklace of pearls, which one fears to pull apart.”

If I should be suspected here, as the best historians have been, of substituting a fictitious speech for that conversation, I might express the wish, that some short-hand writer had been near to seize this peroration and hand it down to us. The thoughts would be found the same, and the flow of speech perhaps more graceful and attractive. Especially is there wanting to this present representation as a whole the diffuse eloquence and fullness of youth, which feels itself and knows not where its strength and faculty will carry it.

In a city like Frankfort, one was placed in a strange position ; strangers continually crossing each other, point to every region of the globe, and awaken a passion for travelling. On many an occasion before this I had shown my fondness for motion, and now at the very moment when it was necessary to make the experiment whether I could renounce Lili—when a certain painful unrest unfitted me for all stated business, the proposition of the Stolbergs, that I should accompany them to Switzerland, was welcome. Favored by the consent of my father, who looked with pleasure on a journey in that direction, and who advised me not to delay a passage over into Italy on the first suitable occasion, I decided at once to go, and soon had all packed. With some intimation, but without leave-taking, I separated my-

self from Lili ; she had so grown into my heart, that I did not believe it possible to be removed from her.

In a few hours I saw myself with my pleasant travelling companions in Darmstadt. Even at court we should not always act with perfect propriety ; here Count Haugwitz took the lead. He was the youngest of us, well formed, of a gentle, noble bearing, soft, friendly features, an equable disposition, sympathizing, but with so much moderation that he contrasted with the others as impassible. Consequently, he had to bear from them all sorts of jibes and nicknames. This was all very well, so long as they believed that they might show themselves as nature's children ; but when it came to the matter of propriety, and when one was again obliged, not unwillingly, to appear as Count, then he knew how to introduce and to smoothe over everything, so that we always came off, if not best, yet with tolerable éclat.

I spent some time meanwhile with Merk, who in his Mephistophelian manner looked upon my intended journey with an evil eye, and managed to describe my companions, who had also visited him, with merciless discrimination. In his way he knew me thoroughly ; my naïve and indomitable good nature was painful to him ; the everlasting indifference, the live and let live was his detestation. "It is a foolish trick," he said, "your going with these Burschen ;" and then he would describe them accurately, but not altogether justly. Throughout there was wanting a good feeling, and therefore I could believe that I could oversee him, although it was not so much overseeing as being able to appreciate those regions which lay without his circle of vision.

"You will not stay long with them !" that was the result of his conversations. In this connexion I remember a remarkable word, which he repeated to me at a later time, which I repeated to myself, and often found significant in life. "Thy striving," said he, "thy unswerving direction is to give a poetic form to the actual ; others seek to actualize the so-called poetic, the imaginative, and nothing comes of that but stupid stuff." Whoever apprehends the immense difference between these two modes of

action, whoever holds it fast and applies it, has reached the solution of a thousand other things.

Unhappily, before the company left Darmstadt, there was occasion again to verify the opinion of Merk beyond dispute.

Among the extravaganzas which grew out of the idea that we should try to transport ourselves into a state of nature, was that of bathing in public waters, under the open heavens; and our friends, after violating every sort of propriety, could not forego here this additional unseemliness. Darmstadt, situated on a sandy plain, without running water, had yet a pond in the neighborhood, of which I only heard on this occasion. The hot-blooded friends, who kept continually heating themselves, sought refreshment in this pond; to see naked youths in the clear sunshine, might well seem something strange in this region; it furnished scandal on all sides. Merk sharpened his conclusions, and, I cannot conceal it, that I hastened our departure.

On the way to Mannheim, in spite of general good and noble feelings, a certain difference in sentiment and conduct already exhibited itself. Leopold Stolberg declared with passion, how he had been compelled to renounce a heartfelt love-relation with a beautiful English lady, and on that account had undertaken so long a journey. When he received in return the sympathizing confession that we too were not strangers to such experiences, then the unbounded feeling of youth broke out in him. With his passion, his sufferings, as well as with the beauty and loveliness of his beloved, nothing in the world could compare. If we tried to bring such an assertion into equilibrium by moderate observations, as is proper among good companions, the thing was only made worse, and Count Haugwitz, as well as I, was inclined at last to let the subject drop. Arrived at Mannheim we engaged pleasant chambers in a respectable hotel, and during the dessert of the first dinner, where the wine was not spared, Leopold challenged us to drink to the health of his fair one, which was done with all becoming uproar. After the glasses were drained he cried out: But now out of such consecrated glasses must no more drinking be permitted; a second health would be a profanation, therefore let us annihilate these vessels! and he forthwith threw the glass behind him against the wall. The rest



of us followed, and I imagined at that moment, that Merk pulled my collar.

But youth takes with it this peculiarity of childhood, that it harbors no malice against good companions ; that its unsophisticated good nature may be unpleasantly affected, to be sure, but cannot be permanently put out.

After the glasses thus proclaimed angelical had added a round sum to our reckoning, comforted and cheerful we made all haste for Carlsruhe, there confidently and free from care to enter a new circle. There we found Klopstock, who still exercised with dignity his old dominion over the disciples who all held him in such reverence ; I willingly acknowledged my allegiance also, so that, when bidden to court with the others, I probably appeared quite well as a novice. One felt, too, in a certain manner called upon to be both natural and grave.

The reigning Margrave, highly honored among the German rulers as one of their princely seniors, but more especially on account of his excellent governmental schemes, was glad to converse about matters of political economy. Her Ladyship, the Margravine, active about the arts and various useful branches of knowledge, a travelled personage withal, was also pleased by some graceful speeches to manifest a certain sympathy ; for which we were duly grateful, though we could not refrain at home from venting some severity upon her miserable paper-manufactory, and her protection of the book-pirate Macklot.

The most important thing for me, was, that the young duke of Saxe-Weimar with his noble bride, the princess Louisa of Hesse-Darmstadt, had here met to enter into a formal matrimonial engagement ; President von Moser had already arrived on the same business, in order to explain these important relations and fully conclude them with the prince's governor, Count Görtz. My interviews with both of these high personages were most agreeable, and they closed the farewell audience with the repeated assurance, that it would be pleasant to both sides, to see me soon in Weimar.

Some particular conversations with Klopstock, by the friendliness which he showed me, made me open and confiding towards him. I communicated to him the latest scenes of Faust, which

he seemed to find acceptable, and indeed, as I afterwards learned, he spoke of them to other persons with distinguished approbation, a thing not usual with him, and wished to see the conclusion of the piece.

Our former rude, though genial conduct, as we called it, was somewhat chastened in Carlsruhe, which is decent, and almost holy ground. I parted from my companions, on a little side-excursion to Emmendingen, where my brother-in-law was high bailiff. I looked upon this visit to my sister as a real trial. I knew that she lived unhappily, without having cause to find fault with her husband, or with circumstances. She was of a peculiar nature, of which it is difficult to speak; whatever can be with propriety imparted, we will bring together here.

A fine form was in her favor; but not so her features, which, although expressing goodness, intelligence, and sympathy, clearly enough, yet lacked a certain regularity and grace. Add to this, that a high and strongly arched forehead, through the abominable fashion of brushing the hair and fastening it back out of the face, made a certain unpleasant impression, although it bore the best testimony to her moral and intellectual qualities. I can imagine, that if she had surrounded the upper part of her face with curls, after the modern fashion, and clothed her temples and cheeks with smooth ringlets, she would have found herself more agreeable before the mirror, without fear of displeasing others more than herself. Then there was the mischief, that her skin was seldom pure, an evil which, by some demoniacal fatality, from her youth up, was most apt to appear at festal days, concerts, balls, and other invitations.

These misfortunes she had fought her way through one by one, while her other noble qualities grew more and more prominent.

A firm inflexible character, a soul that sympathized and needed sympathy, a fine mental culture, polite knowledge as well as talents; some languages, a clever pen,—so that if she had been outwardly favored, she would have passed among the choicest women of her time.

Besides all this there is one strange thing to be mentioned: there was not the slightest sensuality in her nature. She had grown up near me, and she wished to spend her life in this bro-

therly and sisterly harmony. We had been inseparable since my return from the Academy ; in the most intimate confidence we held our thoughts, feelings, humors, and accidental impressions, in common. When I went to Wetzlar, the loneliness seemed to her unendurable ; my friend Schlosser, not unknown and not unwelcome to the good child, stepped into my place. Unfortunately the brotherly affection in him changed into a decided, and in his strictly conscientious character, perhaps a first passion. Here was presented, as we say, a very marriageable and desirable partner, whom she, after having steadfastly rejected several significant proposals, but from insignificant men, from whom she always shrank, was finally persuaded, as I may say, to accept.

I must frankly confess that I, indulging frequently in fancies about her destiny, did not like to think of her as the mistress of a family, but rather as an Abbess, as the Lady Superior of a noble community. She possessed every requisite for such a high position, she wanted what the world deems indispensable. Over feminine souls she always exercised an irresistible influence ; young minds were drawn lovingly towards her, and she ruled them by the spirit of her inward excellences. As she shared my universal tolerance for the good, the human, with all its eccentricities, provided they did not amount to perversity, there was no need that any idiosyncrasy, by which a strong nature might be distinguished, should conceal itself before her, or feel under constraint in her presence ; hence our companionships, as we have seen before, were always varied, free, ingenuous, if sometimes bordering on boldness. My habit of respectful and obliging intimacy with young ladies, without any decided limitation or appropriation growing out of it, was due in great degree to her. And now the sagacious reader, who is capable of reading between these lines what does not stand written, or is only implied, may form some conception of the serious feelings with which I then wended my way to Emmendingen.

But at my departure, after a short stay, it lay still more heavily on my heart, that my sister had most earnestly recommended, and indeed commanded a separation from Lili. She had suffered much from an irksome marriage engagement ; Schlosser, in his

uprightness, did not betroth himself to her, until he had become sure of his appointment in the Grand Duchy of Baden ; indeed, until he was actually appointed. The decision, however, was delayed in an incredible manner. If I may express my suspicions in the matter, the brave Schlosser, capable as he might have been in business, was not, on account of his downright integrity, desirable to the prince as a prompt and available servant, and still less to the minister, as a near fellow-worker. His expected and earnestly desired appointment in Carlsruhe came to nothing. But the delay was explained to me, when the place of Upper Bailiff in Emmendingen became vacant, and he was instantly transferred to it. An office of much dignity and profit was now intrusted to him, for which he showed himself fully competent. It seemed entirely suited to his taste, his mode of action, to stand here alone where he could act according to his conviction, and be held responsible for everything, whether he was praised or blamed.

As no objections could be raised to this, my sister had to follow him, not indeed to a Residence, as she had hoped, but to a place which must have seemed to her a solitude, a desert ; to a dwelling, spacious to be sure, official-looking, stately, but destitute of everything sociable. Some young ladies, with whom she had cultivated an early friendship, followed her there, and as the Gorock family was blessed with daughters, these contrived to alternate, so that she always enjoyed the presence of at least one long-trusted friend, in the midst of much privation.

It was by these circumstances, these experiences, that she felt justified in enjoining upon me, most earnestly, a separation from Lili. She thought it hard to take such a young lady, of whom she had formed the highest ideas, out of the midst of a very lively, if not a splendid existence, and shut her up in our old house, which, although very commendable in its way, was not contrived for the accommodation of distinguished society, between a well-disposed, unsociable, but very didactic father, and a mother extremely active in her domestic matters, who, after her business was over, did not like to be disturbed in any convenient little bit of handiwork, to carry on an intellectual conversation with refined and educated young persons. She explained to me in a

clear and lively manner, all Lili's relations ; for, partly in letters, partly in impassioned confidential talk, I had told her everything to a hair.

Unfortunately her description was only a circumstantial and well-meant expression of what a gossiping friend, in whom no great confidence was placed, had contrived to whisper into her ears with a few characteristic traits.

Promise her, I could not, although I was obliged to confess that she had convinced me. I went on with that enigmatic feeling in my heart, with which passion always nourishes itself ; for Love the Child clings obstinately to the garment of Hope, even when she has taken steps to flee away.

The only thing between this place and Zurich which I now clearly remember, is the falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen. A mighty cascade here indicates the approach into a mountainous region, which we were glad to enter ; and where, step after step, in every increasing ratio, we should gradually climb our way to the heights.

The view of the lake of Zurich, which we enjoyed from the door of the Sword, is still before me ; I say from the door of the tavern, for I did not go into it, but hastened to Lavater. The reception was cheerful and hearty, and I must confess, exceedingly gracious ; no one could think of his presence, except as trustful, considerate, benign, and edifying. His wife, with somewhat singular, but serene, tender, and pious features, fully harmonized, like everything else about him, with his way of thinking and living.

Our first, and almost uninterrupted theme of conversation, was his system of Physiognomy. The first part of this remarkable work, was, if I mistake not, already printed ; or, at least, near its completion. It might be called at once genial and empirical, methodical and universal. I bore the strangest relation to it. • Lavater wanted all the world for co-operators and sympathizers ; he had already, in his travels on the Rhine, had portraits taken of a great many distinguished men, in order to excite their personal interest in a work in which they were to appear. He proceeded in the same way with artists ; he called upon every one to send him drawings for illustrations. They came, and were not exactly suited to the end. So, too, he procured copper-plate

engravings from everywhere, which seldom turned out characteristic. A great labor was accomplished on his part ; with money and support of all sorts, a significant work was got ready, to do full honor to Physiognomy ; and as it was now to become a volume, as Physiognomy with its doctrinal grounds and illustrations was soon to approach the dignity of a science, it was found that not a picture said what it ought to say ; all the plates had to be censured or taken with exceptions, never praised, but only tolerated ; and many, indeed, were quite effaced by explanations. For me, who always sought a foothold before I went on, it was one of the most painful tasks which could be set to my activity. Let the reader judge. The manuscript, with the plates interpolated, came to me at Frankfort. I was authorized to strike out everything that displeased me, to change and put in what I liked ; but I made a very moderate use of the liberty. In one instance he had introduced a violent controversial piece against an unjust censor, which I left out, and substituted a cheerful poem about nature ; for this he scolded me, although afterwards, when he had cooled down, he approved my course.

Whoever has turned over the four volumes of the treatise on Physiognomy, and (what he will not repent of) read them, may conceive the interest our being together had, while most of the plates contained in it were already drawn and part of them engraved, examined, and decided on, and we were now excogitating the means by which the unfit ones might be made instructive and even fit.

If I look through the work of Lavater now, it gives me a comic, cheerful feeling ; it is as if I saw before me the shadows of men even well known to me at that time, over which I once worried, and in which I find little satisfaction now.

The possibility, however, of keeping together in some sort, so much that was unsuitable, lay in the fine and decided talent of the sketcher and engraver, Lips ; he was, in fact, born for the free prosaic representation of the actual, which was precisely the thing here wanted. He worked under the singularly exacting physiognomist, and had as much as he could do to approximate to the demands of his master ; the accomplished journeyman felt the whole obligation he was under to a clerical gentleman

from a city of such high privileges, and gave the best care to his business.

Living in a separate house from my companions, I became every day more of a stranger to them, without causing the least unpleasant feeling; our rural excursions were no longer made together, although in the city there was still some intercourse kept up. They had announced themselves with all the arrogance of young counts, at Lavater's, before whose practised eye they appeared somewhat differently from what they did before the rest of the world. He expressed himself to me about it, and I remember perfectly well, that, speaking of Leopold Stolberg, he exclaimed: "I know not what you all would have; he is a noble, excellent youth, and full of talent; but you have described him to me as a hero, as a Hercules, and I have never in my life seen a more gentle and more tender young man; nor, if need be, one more easily influenced. I am far from any certain physiognomical insight, but as it seems to you and the crowd, it is certainly confused enough."

Since Lavater's journey on the lower Rhine, the interest in him and in his physiognomical studies had increased very greatly; all manner of visitors crowded upon him, so that he felt in some sort embarrassed at being looked upon as the first of spiritual and intellectual men, and the chief point of attraction for strangers; but, to banish all envy and unpleasant feeling, he managed to remind and warn his visitors that they must treat other distinguished men with friendship and respect.

Especial regard was had, in this, to the aged BODMER, and we were compelled to visit him to pay our youthful respects to him. He lived on a hill, over the larger or old city, which lay above the right bank, where the lake crowds its waters together on the Limmat; this we crossed, and surmounted at last, by an even steeper path, the height behind the walls, where, between the fortifications and the old city wall, a suburb had sprung up, partly in continuous and partly in scattered houses, with a half country look. Here stood Bodmer's house, the abode of his whole life, in the freest, cheerfullest environment, which, in the beauty and clearness of the day, we overlooked with the highest satisfaction before we entered.

We were conducted up one flight of stairs into a wainscoted chamber, where a brisk old man, of middle stature, came to meet us. He received us with his usual greeting to young visitors: we must reckon it an act of courtesy in him, that he had delayed so long his departure from all temporalities in order to receive us kindly, to learn to know us, to refresh himself with our talents, and to wish us joy in our future career.

We, on the other hand, congratulated him that, as a poet belonging to the patriarchal world, and yet in the neighborhood of the most highly cultivated city, he had possessed his whole life long a truly idyllic dwelling, and, in the high free air, had enjoyed for so many long years such a wide prospect with constant satisfaction to his eyes.

It seemed not disagreeable to him, that we invited ourselves to take a survey from his window; and truly the prospect in the cheerful sunshine, in the best season of the year, appeared incomparably fine. We looked down upon much of the slope, from the great city to the water's edge, upon the smaller city over the Limmat, as well as upon the fertility of the Sihl-feld, towards evening. Behind us, on the left, was a part of the Lake of Zurich, with its shining rippled surface, and its endless variety of alternating mountain and valley shores, elevations, and changes, uncontainable by the eye; beyond which, dazzled by all this, you beheld, with deepest longing, the blue ranges of the loftier mountains in the distance, whose summits you could trust yourself to call by name.

The rapture of young men over the extraordinary beauty which had been about him daily for so many years, appeared to please him; he became ironically sympathizing, so to speak, and we took leave of him as the best friends, though a yearning for those blue mountain heights had already gained the upper hand in our souls.

As I am now proposing to take leave of our worthy patriarch, I remark, in the first place, that I have as yet said nothing of his form and countenance, of his movements, and his manner of conducting himself.

In truth, I do not think it just the thing for travellers to describe a distinguished man, whom they visit, as if they wanted



to furnish materials for the advertisement of a runaway. No one considers that it is only for a moment, when brought into the great man's presence, that one eagerly observes him, and this, too, in his own way; and so the person visited is seen now actually, and now apparently, to be proud or meek, silent or talkative, cheerful or morose. In this particular case, however, I might excuse myself by saying that Bodmer's venerable person described in words would make no adequate impression. Fortunately his picture exists by Count von Bause, which perfectly represents the man as he appeared to us, and, indeed, with that penetrating and reflective look of his.

A peculiar, not indeed unexpected, but highly coveted satisfaction awaited me in Zurich, where I met my young friend, Passavant, in person. The son of a respectable Protestant house in my native city, he lived in Switzerland, at the fountain-head of that doctrine which he was afterwards to proclaim as preacher. With a form not large, but active, his face and his whole manner promised that he would be as quick and resolute as he would be agreeable. His hair and beard were black, his eyes vivid. On the whole, you saw in him a sympathizing but moderate activity.

Scarcely had we, embracing one another, exchanged the first greetings, when he immediately proposed to me to visit the little cantons which we had already wandered through with great delight, and with the sight of which he wished to excite my rapture and enthusiasm.

Whilst I had been talking over, with Lavater, the nearest and most important matters, until we had nearly exhausted our common business, my lively fellow-travellers had already sallied forth in various directions, and had looked about the country in their way. Passavant, encircling me with hearty friendship, believed that he had thus obtained a right to the exclusive possession of my society, and, in the absence of my companions, continued to entice me to the mountains, all the more easily, since I was already decidedly inclined, with perfect calmness, and in my own way, to accomplish the long-sighed-for ramble. We stepped into a boat and sailed up the glorious lake, with a fine, clear morning.

A poem inserted here may give the reader some intimation of those happy moments :

My blood flows fresh, my soul finds food,  
 I roam the world at large ;  
 And Nature—smiles she not most good ?  
 Who holds my heart in charge.  
 The wavelets lift our little boat,  
 With the oars, in measured beat,  
 And hills, piled cloud-like, hither float  
 Our bounding bark to meet.

Eye, mine eye, why art thou sinking ?  
 Of those dreams must still be thinking ?  
 Go, Dream ! golden as thou art ;  
*Here*, too, love and life have part

Under the wave fly, blinking,  
 Shoals of stars, as I ponder ;  
 Flocks of clouds hang drinking  
 Round the hills away yonder ;  
 Morning wind is dancing  
 O'er the shadowy cove,  
 From the lake come glancing  
 Fruits, half hid in the grove.

We landed in Richterswyl, where we had an introduction from Lavater to Doctor HOTZE. As a physician, as a highly intelligent and benevolent man, he enjoyed great esteem in his place and in the whole country, and we can do no better honor to his memory than by referring to a passage in Lavater's Physiognomy, which describes him.

After being most hospitably entertained, after the most agreeable and instructive conversation about the next halting-places in our journey, we ascended the mountains which lay behind this place. When we were ready to descend again into the vale of Schindellegi, we turned round once more, to drink in the charming prospect over the Lake of Zurich. How I felt at that moment the following lines indicate, which were written down on the spot, and are still preserved in a little memorandum book :

If I, lovely Lili, had not loved *thee*,  
 How I'd revel in a scene like this !  
 And yet if I, Lili, did not love thee,  
 Ah ! what scene would yield me any bliss ?

I find this little ejaculation more expressive here, than as it stands printed in the collection of my poems.

The rough ways, which led from here to St. Mary's hermitage, could not get the better of our good spirits. A number of pilgrims, whom we had remarked below upon the lake, moving regularly on with prayer and song, had invited us to join them ; we saluted them and let them pass, and as they asked our co-operation in their pious object, they animated these dreary heights with a characteristic grace. We saw depicted to the life, the serpentine path which we too had to travel, and we seemed to follow it more joyfully ; the customs of the Romish church are altogether significant and imposing to the Protestant, inasmuch as he only recognises the first, the inmost, by which they were called out, the human element by which they have been propagated from race to race ; penetrating at once to the kernel, without being absorbed for a moment with the shell, the rind, nor even with the tree itself, its twigs, and leaves, and bark, and roots.

We now saw in a dreary, treeless vale, the splendid church rise up before us, the cloister, of broad and stately compass, to fit it to receive so great a number, and such variety of guests.

The little church within the church, the former hermitage of the saint, incrustated with marble, and transformed as much as possible into a respectable chapel, was something new to me ; I had seen nothing like this little tub, surrounded and built over with pillars and vaults. It could not but excite earnest reflections, to see how a single spark of goodness, and the fear of God, had kindled here a bright ever burning flame, to which troops of believers should make painful pilgrimages, to light their little rush-lights also at the holy fire. However it may be, it points to an unbounded craving of humanity, for equal light, for equal warmth, with that which this old hermit cherished and enjoyed in the deepest feeling and the most secure conviction. They led us into the treasure chamber, rich and imposing enough, which offered to the astonished eye busts of the size of life, and indeed colossal, of the saints and founders of the order.

But quite a different sort of attention was awakened at the sight of a room opening upon this. It was filled with antique valuables which had been consecrated to the church. Various

golden crowns of remarkable workmanship attracted us ; among which one fixed my attention exclusively. It was a pointed crown, in the style of ancient art, such as one may have seen on the heads of ancient queens, but of such tasteful design, of such elaborate execution, even the colored stones fitted in and distributed about, or set opposite each other, with such apt selection ; in short, a work of art, which one would pronounce perfect at the first look, without waiting to unfold his impression by the laws of art.

In such cases, where the art is not recognised, but felt, one's heart and soul are tempted to covet possession of the jewel, that he may impart pleasure to others with it. I got permission to take out the little crown, and as I held it up steadily in my hand, I could not help thinking, that I must press it upon the bright, glittering locks of Lili, lead her before the mirror, and witness her joy over herself, and the joy which she spread around her. I have often thought since, that this scene, if realized by a skilful painter, would be beautiful and full of meaning. It were worth one's while to be the young king who should receive a bride and a new kingdom in this way.

To show us the possessions of the cloister completely, they took us into a cabinet of natural and artificial curiosities. I had then but little idea of the worth of such things ; at that time the study of the earth's surface, so commendable in itself, but so apt to pull to pieces the beautiful whole of nature before the mind's eye, had not begun to entice me, still less had I got lost in the fantastic labyrinths of geology ; yet the monk who led us round, compelled me to bestow some attention on a fossil, much prized as he said by connoisseurs, a small wild boar's head well preserved in a lump of blue fuller's clay, which, black as it was, has dwelt in my imagination ever since. They had found it in the country of Rapperswyl, a country from the earliest times so full of morasses, that it could well receive and keep such mummies for posterity.

Quite a different attraction did I feel for a copperplate engraving of Martin Schoen, under frame and glass, representing the departure of Mary. True, a perfect example only can give us an idea of the art of such a master ; but then we are so seized

with it, as with the perfect in every art, that we cannot rid ourselves of the desire to possess the like, to be able to repeat the sight of it, however much time may have elapsed between. Why should I not anticipate and confess here, that on a later visit I did not leave it until I had succeeded in getting an excellent copy of this plate !

On the 16th of July, 1775 (for here I find the first date noted down), we entered upon a toilsome way ; there were wild stony heights to be surmounted, and that in perfect solitude and dreariness. At a quarter before eight in the evening, we stood before the Schwyzer-Haken, two mountain-tops which jutted out boldly, side by side, into the air. For the first time, we found snow upon our way, and on those jagged rocks it had been hanging since the winter. Sternly and fearfully a primeval pine forest filled the immeasurable hollows, into which we were about to descend. After a short rest, with fresh and willing activity, we sprang from cliff to cliff, from plane to plane, down the precipitous foot-path, and arrived by ten o'clock at Schwyz. We had become at once weary and cheerful, ready to sink down and excited ; eagerly we quenched our thirst, and felt ourselves still more inspired. Imagine the young man, who about two years before had written Werther, with a younger friend who had already been kindled by the manuscript of that remarkable work, both without their knowing it or wishing it, transported in a certain manner into a natural situation, vividly recalling past passions, clinging to those of the present, shaping fruitless plans in the consciousness of happy powers, rioting in the realm of fancy, and you will have some conception of our situation then, which I should not know how to describe, if it did not stand written in my journal : " Laughing and shouting lasted until midnight."

On the morning of the 17th, we saw the Schwyzer-Haken before our windows. Upon these monstrous and irregular natural pyramids, clouds on clouds ascended. At one in the afternoon we left Schwyz, on our way to the Rigi ; at two we were on the Lawerzer lake, in brilliant sunshine. For sheer delight we saw nothing. Two pretty maidens guided the graceful boat ; and we suffered it to be so. We arrived upon the island, where they say ; here lived the former lord of the castle ; be this as it may,

between the ruins now the hut of the anchorite has been inserted.

We climbed the Rigi; at half-past seven we stood by the Mother of God in the snow; then in the chapel, passing by the cloister, and resting at the hotel of the Ox.

On the 18th, Sunday morning early, the chapel was sketched from the Ox. At twelve we went to Kaltenbad, or the fountain of the Three Sisters. By a quarter after two we had reached the summit; we found ourselves in the clouds, this time doubly disagreeable to us, since they both hindered the prospect and wetted us with mist. But when they opened here and there, and showed us, surrounded by their wavering frame, a clear, majestic, sun-lit world, like an advancing, ever-alternating picture, we no longer lamented this accident; for it was a sight never seen before or since, and we lingered long in this somewhat inconvenient predicament, to catch a glance occasionally through the rifts and crevices of the ever-shifting clouds, of some little point of sunny earth, some little strip of shore, or corner of the lake.

At eight in the evening we were again back before the door of the inn, and refreshed ourselves with baked fishes and eggs, and plenty of wine.

As the twilight and the night came on, our ears were filled with mysterious but harmonizing tones; the murmur of the chapel bells, the splashing of the fountain, the whistling of the changeful breezes, chiming in with the distant wood-horn;—they were blessed, soothing, tranquillizing moments.

Early on the 19th, at half-past six, after ascending a little way, we went down by the Waldstätter Lake to Fitznau; from there, by water, to Gersau. At noon, in the hotel on the lake. About two o'clock we were opposite to Grütli, where the three Tells conspired; here, upon the flat rock on to which the hero sprang, and where, in his honor, the legend of his life and deeds is immortalized by painting. At three we were at Fluellen, where he embarked; and at four in Altorf, where he shot the apple.

By this poetic thread one winds conveniently through the labyrinth of these rocky walls which, descending abruptly to the water, have nothing to say to us. They, the immovable, stand

there as quietly as the coulisses of a theatre ; success or failure, joy or sorrow, merely pertain to the persons upon the stage.

Such reflections, however, were wholly out of the circle of vision of those young men ; they had stricken out from their thoughts what had immediately passed, and the future lay as strangely inscrutable before them, as the mountain region into which they were laboriously penetrating.

On the 20th, we breakfasted at Arnstäg, where they gave us some baked fishes which were right palatable. Here now, on this already wild enough outpost of the mountains, where the Reuss was rushing from the rugged cliffs, and the fresh snow-water playing over the clear pebbly shores, I could not help availing myself of the longed-for opportunity to refresh myself in the foaming waves.

At three o'clock we proceeded onwards ; a row of sumpter-horses went before us, we marched with them over a broad mass of snow, and learned for the first time, afterwards, that it was hollow underneath. The snows of winter had deposited themselves here in a mountain gorge, which otherwise we should have had to go round, but which now served for a direct and shorter road. The waters pouring through below had gradually hollowed it out, through the mild summer air the vault had melted away more and more, so that it now, like a broad arched bridge, held the opposite sides together. We convinced ourselves of this strange freak of nature by venturing more than half way under, into the broadest part of the gorge. As we kept ascending, we left pine forests in the chasm, through which the Reuss, foaming over rocky precipices, from time to time appeared.

At half-past seven we arrived at Wasen, where, in order to refresh ourselves with the red, heavy, sour Lombardy wine, we had first to help ourselves with water, and supply by a great deal of sugar the ingredient which nature had refused to elaborate in the grape. The landlord showed us some beautiful crystals ; but I was then so far removed from such studies of nature, that I did not care to burden myself with these mountain products, even at a trifling price.

On the 21st, at half-past six, still upwards ; the rocks grew ever mightier and more terrible ; the way to the Devil's Stone,

to the prospect of the Devil's Bridge, still more difficult. My companion was disposed to rest here; he excited me to sketch the most important views. With the outlines I might have succeeded, but nothing seemed to stand out, nothing to fall back; for such objects I had no language. We toiled on further; the monstrous wilderness seemed continually to increase, planes became hills, and hollows chasms. And so my guide conducted me to the hole of Ursern, through which I walked somewhat uncomfortably; what we had seen thus far, sublime as it was, the darkness took away.

But the roguish guide anticipated the joyful astonishment which would surprise me on our exit. The moderately foaming stream wound mildly here through a level vale surrounded by mountains, but wide enough, and inviting to a habitation. Above the clean little village of Ursern and its church, which stood opposite to us on the level ground, rose a pine grove which was held sacred, because it protected the hermits at its foot from the rolling of the avalanches. The meadows of the valley, just beginning to look green, were adorned along the river side with short willows; here you could enjoy a long-missed vegetation. The tranquillity was great; upon the level paths you felt your powers revive again, and my fellow-traveller pleased himself not a little with the surprise which he had so skilfully introduced.

On the meadow was found the celebrated Ursern cheese, and the exalted young men found tolerable wine quite excellent, in order to enhance their satisfaction, and to lend a more fantastic glow to their projects.

On the 22d, at half-past three, we left our harbor, and from the smooth Ursern valley entered upon the stony valley of Liviner. Here, too, we missed all vegetation; naked as well as mossy rocks covered with snow, fitful gusts blowing the clouds backwards and forwards, the rustling of waterfalls, the tinkling of beasts of burden in the midst of supreme solitude, where you saw none coming and none departing. It does not cost the imagination much to see dragons' nests in these clefts. But we were inspired and elevated by one of the most beautiful and picture-suggesting waterfalls, sublimely various in all its shelves, which being just at this time of the year enriched by melted



snows, half hidden by the clouds, and half revealed, chained us for a considerable time to the spot.

Finally, we came to little mist lakes, as I might call them, since they were scarcely to be distinguished from the atmospheric streaks. Before long, a building loomed before us out of the vapor : it was the hospital, and we felt great satisfaction at being able to shelter ourselves under its hospitable roof.

# BOOK NINETEENTH.



## NINETEENTH BOOK.

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ANNOUNCED by the low barking of a little dog which ran out to meet us, we were cordially received by an elderly but active female personage at the door. She apologized for the absence of the Father Superior, who had gone to Milan, but was expected home that evening ; and instantly she bestirred herself, without making many words, for our convenience and necessities. A warm and spacious room received us ; bread, cheese, and wine, quite passable, were set before us, and a satisfactory supper promised. The surprises of the day were now talked over, and my friend congratulated himself a great deal on such good success, and that a day was put behind us whose impressions neither poetry nor prose could ever reproduce.

With the coming on of the late twilight the venerable father at length entered, greeted his guests with friendly and confiding dignity, and in a few words bade the cook bestow all possible attention. When we could not keep back our wonder, that he had been willing to pass his life up there, in such a perfect wilderness, removed from all society, he assured us that he found no lack of society, as our own visit might testify. There was a lively reciprocation of trade between Italy and Germany. This continual interchange brought him into relation with the first mercantile houses. He often went down to Milan, but not so often to Lucern, from which place, however, the houses which had charge of the postage business on that main route frequently sent young people to him, who, up here on the turning point, desired to become acquainted with all the circumstances and events which gave it interest.

Amid such varied conversation the evening passed away, and we slept a quiet night on a somewhat short bedstead, fastened to

the wall, which resembled a book-rack rather than a bedstead.

Rising early, I soon found myself under the open sky, but in a narrow space surrounded by the tall mountain-tops. I sat down upon the foot-path which led to Italy, and drew, after the manner of dilettanti, what could not be drawn, and what still less afforded a picture; the nearest mountain-tops, whose sides, with their white furrows and black ridges, were made visible by the melting snow. Nevertheless, that fruitless effort has impressed the image ineradicably on my memory.

My companion stepped briskly up to me, and began: "What say you of the story of our spiritual host, last evening? Would you not, as well as myself, feel a pleasure in descending from this dragon's height into those charming regions below? Our ramble through these hollows must be glorious and without much labor, and when it opens upon Bellinzona, what a pleasure that will be! The isles of the Lago-Maggiore have again passed livingly into my soul through the good father's words. We have heard and seen so much of them since Keyssler's travels, that I cannot resist the temptation."

"Is it not so with you too?" he resumed; "you are sitting on exactly the right spot; I stood here once, and had not the courage to jump down. Do you go on without ceremony, wait for me at Airolo, I will follow with the courier when I have taken leave of the good father and made all right."

Such an extemporaneous undertaking will not please me, I replied. "What's the use of so much considering?" cried he; "we have money enough to get to Milan, credit will be found, through our fair here I know more than one mercantile friend there." He grew still more urgent. Go! said I, make all ready for the departure, then we will decide.

It seems to me as if a man, in such moments, felt no resolution in him, but was rather governed and determined by earlier impressions. Lombardy and Italy lay like a whole foreign land before me; Germany, like a well-known, dear home, full of friendly views, and let me confess it, that which had so long entirely enchained me, and supported my existence, still remained the most indispensable element, out of whose limits I had no con-

fidence to step. A little golden heart, which I had received from her in the happiest hours, still hung by the same ribbon to which she had tied it, love-warmed about my neck. I seized it, and kissed it; a poem to which this gave rise may be inserted here :

Remembrancer of joys long passed away ;  
Relic, from which as yet I cannot part ;  
O, hast thou power to lengthen love's short day ?  
Stronger thy chain than that which bound the heart ?

Lili, I fly ! yet still thy fetters press me  
In distant valley, or far lonely wood.  
Still will a struggling sigh of pain confess thee,  
The mistress of my soul in every mood.

The bird may burst the silken chain which bound him,  
Flying to the green home which fits him best ;  
But ah ! he bears the prisoner's badge around him,  
Still by the piece about his neck distressed.  
He ne'er can breathe his free, wild notes again ;  
They're stifled by the pressure of his chain.

I rose up quickly, to remove from the steep place, lest my friend, who came storming on with the courier and pack-saddle, should tear me down into the abyss with him. I also saluted the pious father, and turned, without losing a word, to the path by which we had come. Somewhat hesitating, my friend followed me, and in spite of his love and attachment to me, he tarried some way behind for a long time, till at last that glorious waterfall brought us again together and kept us together, and what was once decided had to pass for good and wholesome.

Of our descent I will only say, that we found that snow-bridge, over which we had securely travelled with a heavy-laden company a few days before, entirely fallen in, and now, as we had to make a circuit through the opened thicket, we were filled with astonishment and admiration by the colossal fragments of that natural architecture.

My friend could not quite get over his disappointment at not returning into Italy ; very likely he had thought it all out some time before, and with amiable cunning had hoped to surprise me on the spot. On this account our retreat did not proceed so

cheerfully ; but I was occupied all the more constantly on my silent route, with trying to fix, at least in its more comprehensible and obvious characteristics, the immense world of association which the time was fitted to gather in our minds.

Not without many new, as well as some renewed feelings and thoughts, did we arrive, through the remarkable heights about the Vierwaldstädter Lake, at Küsnacht, where we landed and pursued our ramble, greeting Tell's chapel by the way, and reflecting upon that assassination which is such a theme of heroism, patriotism, and glory, to the whole world. So, too, we sailed over the Zuger Lake, which we had seen from a distance as we stood on Rigi. In Zing, I only remember a painted pane inserted into the casement of a chamber of the inn, not large to be sure, but excellent in its way. Then our route led over the Albis into the Sihl valley, where we visited a young Hanoverian, Von Linden, who pleased himself with solitude, to mitigate the disappointment which he had felt some time before in Zurich, at my declining his company in not the most friendly and proper mode. The jealous friendship of the excellent Passavant was really the reason of my rejecting the truly dear, but inconvenient presence of another.

But before we descend again from these glorious heights, to the lake and to the city lying there so friendly, I must make one more remark about my attempts to carry away something of the country by my drawings and sketches. A habit from youth up of viewing the landscape as a picture, betrayed me into the attempt, whenever I saw what seemed a picture in nature, to fix it, and preserve a sure memorial of such moments. But having only exercised myself on limited objects thus far, I soon felt my insufficiency in such a world.

Want of time and room at once compelled me to seek a singular means of help : scarcely had I seized an interesting object, and indicated it with a few strokes, in the most general way, on the paper, when I noted down the detail, which I could not catch and execute with the pencil, in words, and gained, by this means, such an inward presence of such scenes, that every locality, as I might afterwards want to use it in a poem or a story, floated at once before me and stood at my command.

On returning to Zurich, I found the Stolbergs no more ; their stay in this city had been cut short in a singular manner.

It must be confessed that travellers who leave the limitation of their homes, think they step not only into a strange, but also into a perfectly free nature ; which delusion we could hug the more, at that time, as we were not yet continually reminded by police examinations of passports, by tolls and other such hindrances, that abroad it is still more limited and worse than at home.

If you will only recall that unconditional tendency to realize the freedom of nature, you will be able to pardon the young spirits who regarded Switzerland as precisely the place in which to Idylize their fresh young nature. The tender poems of Gessner, as well as his most charming sketches, had justified this most decidedly.

In fact, for such poetic expressions, bathing in wide waters seems to be one of the best qualifications. Upon our journey thus far, such natural exercises had not seemed exactly suitable to modern customs, and we had thus abstained from them in some degree. But, in Switzerland, at the sight and the cool feeling of a stream,—flowing, running, rushing, then gathering to an unbroken surface, and gradually spreading out to a lake,—the temptation was not to be resisted. I will not deny that I joined my companions in bathing in the clear lake, and far enough, as we supposed, from all human eyes. But naked bodies shine a good way, and whoever chanced to see us doubtless took offence.

The good harmless youths who found nothing shocking in seeing themselves half naked, like a poetic shepherd, or entirely naked, like a heathen deity, were admonished by their friends to leave off such things. They were made to comprehend that they were not living in primeval nature, but in a land where it was esteemed good and profitable to hold fast to the old institutions and customs handed down from the middle ages. They were not averse to recognising this, especially as the talk was of the middle ages, which, to them, seemed venerable as a second nature. Accordingly, they left the all too public lake shores, and found, in their walks through the mountains, such clear, rustling, refreshing waters, that in the middle of July it seemed



to them impossible to resist such a quickening influence. And so they came on their wide sweeping walks into the shady vale, where the Sihl, streaming behind the Albis, shoots down to empty below Zurich into the Limmat. Far from any habitation, and even from any trodden foot-path, they found it altogether safe to throw off their clothes and boldly run to meet the foaming waves ; and this, you may imagine, was not done without a shriek, without a wild shout of joy, excited partly by the chill and partly by the satisfaction, by which we thought to consecrate these gloomy, wooded rocks to an Idyllic scene.

But, whether persons before ill-disposed to us had crept after us, or whether this poetic tumult called forth adversaries even in the solitude, cannot be determined. Suffice it to say, we had stone after stone thrown down at us from the still bushes above, whether by more or fewer, whether accidentally or purposely, we could not tell ; but we found it wisest to renounce the quickening element and look after our clothes.

No one got hit ; surprise and chagrin were the moral injury we had sustained, and full of young life as we were, we easily shook off the recollection of this awkward matter.

But the most disagreeable consequences extended to Lavater, because he had given a friendly reception to young people of such boldness, had arranged walks with them, and otherwise favored those, whose wild, unbridled, unchristian, and even heathenish nature, had caused so much scandal in a moral and well-regulated country.

Our spiritual friend, however, who well knew how to soften such occurrences, contrived to hush up this, and after the departure of these meteoric travellers, everything was restored to equilibrium on their return.

In the fragment of Werther's travels, which has been lately reprinted in the sixteenth volume of my works, I have sought to describe this contrast of the commendable order and legal restraint of Switzerland, with such a life of nature demanded in the illusions of youth. But, as people are apt to take all that he represents without affectation, as if it were decided opinion, or didactic censure, so the Swiss were very much disturbed by this, and I dropped the intended continuation, which was to have represented,

in some manner, Werther's progress up to the epoch when his sorrows are described, and which, therefore, would certainly have been interesting to those who know mankind.

Arrived at Zurich, I devoted most of my time exclusively to Lavater, whose hospitality I again claimed. The Physiognomy, with all its portraits and its bungling attempts at portraits, weighed on the shoulders of the excellent man an ever-increasing load. We arranged all as well as we could under the circumstances, and I promised him more aid on my return.

To this I was led by youthful confidence in my quick comprehension, still more by the feeling of my ready flexibility ; for the peculiar way in which Lavater dissected physiognomies was not in my vein. The impression which the man made upon me at our first meeting, determined, in some sort, my relation to him ; although the general kindliness which worked in me, joined to the light-heartedness of youth, always prevailed, and caused me to see things in a certain twilight atmosphere.

Lavater's spirit was altogether imposing ; near him you could not resist his decided influence, and I had to submit to observing brow and nose, eyes and mouth, in detail, and to weighing their relations and proportions to each other. The other observer did this from necessity, in order that he might give a perfect account of what he had seen so clearly ; but to me it always seemed like a trick, a piece of espionage, to want to analyse a man into his elements in his own presence, and thus to get upon the trace of his moral peculiarities. I rather clung to his conversation, in which he unveiled himself at will. And yet, I will not deny that there was some constraint in Lavater's presence ; for, while he possessed himself of our peculiarities, in the way of physiognomy, he was also, by conversation, master of our thoughts, which, with a little sagacity, he could easily guess in the exchange of phrases.

He who feels a pregnant synthesis in himself, has peculiarly a right to analyse, since upon outward particulars he tests and legitimizes his inward whole. How Lavater conducted in this case, a single example will show.

On Sundays, after the sermon, it was his duty, as an ecclesiastic, to hold the short-handled velvet box before each one who

went out, and receive the pious gift with blessings. Now, on a certain Sunday he proposed to himself, for example, to see no person, but only to observe their hands, and silently interpret their forms. Not only the form of the finger, but the peculiar mien of the same in dropping the gift, did not escape his attention, and he had much to communicate to me about it. How instructive and exciting must such conversations have been to me, who also was upon the way to qualify myself for a painter of men !

Many times in my after life I had occasion to think about this man, who is one among the most excellent with whom I have ever attained to so intimate a relation. The subjoined remarks about him, therefore, were written at various times. Following our divergent tendencies, we gradually became strangers to each another, and yet I would not allow myself to be diverted from my idea of his excellent nature. I often brought him before my mind, and thus these leaves arose altogether independently of one another, in which there may be found some repetition, but it is hoped no contradiction.

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Lavater was of a decidedly realistic cast of mind, and knew nothing ideal except under the moral form ; by holding this thought fast, you will most readily explain this rare and singular man.

His *Prospects of Eternity* are merely continuations of the present existence, under easier conditions than those which we have now to endure. His *Physiognomy* rests on the conviction that the sensible presence corresponds throughout with the spiritual, and is not only an evidence of it, but indeed its representative.

Art-ideals found small favor with him, because he, with his sharp look, saw too well the impossibility of such natures being organized alive, and therefore banished them into the realm of fable, and even of monstrosity.

His irresistible tendency or want to see the ideal realized gave him the reputation of a visionary, although he felt convinced that no man laid more stress upon the actual than he did ; accordingly, he never could detect the error in his mode of thinking and acting.

Seldom has one striven more passionately to be recognised than he did, and thus he was peculiarly fitted for a teacher ; but if all his labors tended to the intellectual and moral improvement of others, this was by no means their ultimate aim.

To realize the character of Christ was what he had most at heart ; hence that almost insane zeal of his to have one picture after another of Christ drawn, copied, moulded, none of which, as it was natural, would satisfy him.

His writings, even now, are hard to understand, for it is not easy to penetrate into what he precisely means. No one has written so much from the times, and for the times, as he ; his writings are veritable journals, which demand especial explanation from the history of the day ; they are written in the language of a coterie, which one must know in order to be placed in true communication with them, else many things will appear stupid and absurd to the intelligent reader ; and, indeed, objections enough of this sort were made against the man, both during his life and after.

Thus, for example, we had made his head so warm with our dramatizing, representing all that came before us under this form, and caring for no other, that he was stirred up by it to labor very hard in his *Pontius Pilate* to show that there is no more dramatic work than the Bible ; and, especially, that the history of Christ's Passion is to be regarded as the drama of all dramas.

In this chapter of the book, and indeed in the whole work, Lavater appears very much like the Father Abraham of Santa Clara ; for into this manner must every man of rich mind fall, who seeks to work upon the present. He has to inquire into present tendencies, passions, speech, and terminology, to use them for his ends, and to approach the mass whom he would draw to him.

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Since he took Christ literally,—as the Scriptures, and as many commentators give him,—he let this representation serve so much for the supplement of his own being, that he ideally incorporated the God-man into his own individual humanity, until he finally

could imagine himself melted into one with him, united with him, and, indeed, to have become the same person.

Through this decidedly literal faith he must also have gained a perfect conviction that miracles can be wrought to-day as well as at that time, and since he had fully succeeded in some important and trying emergencies at an earlier time, by means of earnest and indeed violent prayer, in procuring on the spot a favorable turn where great calamity was threatening, he could not be made to waver in the least from this faith by any cold objection of the understanding. Penetrated, moreover, by the great worth of a Humanity restored through Christ and destined to a blissful immortality, but acquainted, at the same time, with the manifold necessities of the spirit and the heart, with the boundless yearning for knowledge, himself feeling that desire of expanding himself into the infinite to which the starry heavens sensibly invite us, he projected his "*Prospects of Eternity*," which must have seemed a strange book to the greater part of his contemporaries.

All this striving, however, all wishes, all undertakings, were outweighed by the physiognomical genius which nature had assigned to him. For, as the touchstone, by the blackness and peculiar roughness of its surface, is best adapted to show the distinction between the metals to which it is applied ; so he, through the pure idea of humanity which he bore within himself, and through his sharp yet delicate gift of observation, which he exercised at first from natural impulse only occasionally and accidentally, but afterwards with reflection purposely and regularly, was in the highest degree qualified to note the peculiarities of individual men, to understand, distinguish, and express them.

Every talent which rests on a decided natural gift seems to us to have some magic about it, because we cannot subordinate either it or its operations to any idea. And, actually, Lavater's insight into particular men surpassed all idea ; one was astonished to hear him, when we talked confidentially of this or that person ; nay, it was frightful to live near a man who clearly discerned every limit within which nature had been pleased to confine us individuals.

Every one believes that what he possesses himself may be

communicated to others ; and so Lavater would not make use of this great gift for himself alone, but insisted that it might be found and called forth in others, that it might be transferred to the multitude. To what dull and malicious misinterpretations, to what stupid jests and detracting railleries, this striking doctrine furnished rich occasion, is still in the memory of some men ; and it happened not entirely without the fault of the excellent man himself. For though the unity of his inner being rested on a high morality, yet he could not, with his manifold strivings, attain to outward unity, since in him there was neither ground for philosophical method, nor for artistic talent.

He was neither Thinker nor Poet ; indeed, not even a Speaker, in the peculiar sense of the term. By no means in a condition to comprehend anything methodically, he seized securely on the individuals alone, and placed them boldly side by side ; his great physiognomical work is a striking example and proof of this. In himself, the idea of the moral and the sensual man might form a whole ; but out of himself he knew not how to represent this idea, except practically in individual cases, just as he had comprehended the individual in life.

. That very work sadly shows us how so sharp-sighted a man gropes round in the commonest experience, employs every living artist and botcher, spends an incredible sum for drawings and engravings which have no character, that he may say in his book after each one, that this or that plate was more or less a failure, insignificant, and useless. True, he sharpened his own judgment, and the judgment of others, by the means ; but it also proves that his inclination urged him rather to heap up experiences, than to move freely and clearly among them. For this reason he never could come to results, for which I often pressed him. What he confided as such to his friends in later life, were none to me ; for they consisted of a collection of certain lines and features, nay, warts and freckles, with which he had seen certain moral, and frequently immoral, peculiarities connected. There were some remarks among them that amazed you ; but it formed no series, one thing followed another accidentally, there was no leading forward, and no referring back, to be found. Just as little did any literary method or artistic feel-

ing reign in his other writings, which uniformly contained a passionate and earnest exposition of his thought and purpose, and supplied by the most affecting and spirited particulars what they could not accomplish as a whole.

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The following reflections, also referring to those circumstances, are here inserted in their right place.

No one willingly concedes an excellence to another, so long as he can in any way deny it. Great natural gifts of all kinds are the least to be denied, and yet in the common mode of speaking in those times, genius was ascribed only to the poet. But now, all at once, another world seemed to rise up; genius was demanded of the physician, of the general, of the statesman, and soon, of all men, who thought to make themselves prominent in theory or practice. Zimmerman especially, had expressed these demands. Lavater, in his *Physiognomy*, was compelled to allude to a more general distribution of mental gifts of all sorts; the word genius became a universal watchword, and because men heard it uttered so often, they thought that what was meant by it, was habitually at hand. But then, since every one was justified in demanding genius of others, he finally believed too, that he must possess it himself. The time was yet far distant when it could be declared, that genius is that power of man, which by deed and action gives laws and rules. It was manifested then, only while it overstepped existing laws, threw down established rules, and declared itself above all limits. Therefore, it was an easy thing to be a genius, and nothing was more natural than that abuses in word and deed should provoke all orderly men, to set themselves against such a monster.

When anybody came into the world on foot, without exactly knowing why or whither, he was called a sprig of genius; and when any one undertook an absurd thing without aim, or profit, it was a stroke of genius. Young men, lively, and often truly gifted, lost themselves in the limitless; older men of understanding, perhaps wanting in talent and in soul, found a most malicious

pleasure in ludicrously showing up their manifold miscarriages before the eyes of the public.

And so I almost found myself more hindered in the development and the expression of myself, by the false co-operation and interference of the like-minded, than by the resistance of those whose turn of mind was opposite to mine. Words, terminations, phrases, in disparagement of the highest intellectual gifts, spread themselves by a sort of mechanical imitation among the multitude, so much, that even now you hear them everywhere in common life, from uncultivated persons; indeed they have even crept into the dictionaries. The word *genius* has suffered such a misrepresentation, as to render it almost necessary to banish it entirely from the German language.

And so the Germans, with whom the common is more apt to get the upper hand than with other nations, would perhaps have sacrificed the fairest flower of speech, the word which, though apparently foreign, really belongs to every people, had not the sense for what is highest and best, new-grounded by a deeper philosophy, been happily restored.

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In what precedes there has been frequent mention of the youth-time of two men, whose memory will never be lost from the history of German literature and manners. At the period specified, however, we learned to know them as it were only by their errors, into which they were misled by a false maxim which prevailed among their contemporaries of the same age. Nothing can be more proper now, than that we should present with due appreciation and respect their natural form, their peculiar individuality, just as it then appeared in their immediate presence to the penetrating Lavater; and therefore, since the heavy and expensive volumes of the great work on Physiognomy are probably accessible to but a few of our readers, I do not scruple to insert here the remarkable passages, which refer to both, from the second part of that work, and its thirtieth fragment, on page 244.

“The young men, whose portraits and silhouettes we have here



before us, are the first men who ever sat and stood to me, as one would sit to a painter, for physiognomical description."

"I knew them before, the noble ones—and I made the first attempt, according to nature and all my former knowledge, to observe and to describe their character."

"Here is the description of the whole man."—

#### FIRST, OF THE YOUNGER.

"See the blooming youth of 25 ! the lightly-floating, buoyant, elastic creature ! it does not lie ; it does not stand ; it does not lean ; it does not fly ; it floats or swims. Too full of life, to rest ; too supple to stand fast ; too heavy and too weak, to fly."

"A floating thing then, which does not touch the earth ! In its whole outline not a single slack line ; but on the other hand no straight one, none that is stretched, none that is firmly vaulted, or closely bent ; no sharp entering angles, no rocky promontory of the brow ; no hardness ; no stiffness ; no defiant roughness ; no threatening insolence ; no iron will—all is elastic, winning, but nothing iron ; no steadfast and profound inquiry ; no slow reflection, or prudent thoughtlessness ; nowhere the reasoner with the scales held firmly in the one hand, and the sword in the other ; and yet not the least formality in look or judgment ! and yet the most perfect straight-forwardness of understanding, or rather the most unspotted sentiment of truth ! Always the inward feeler, never the deep thinker ; never the discoverer, developing by proof the truth so quickly seen, so quickly known, so quickly loved, and quickly grasped. . . . Perpetual floater, seer ; idealizer ; beautifier.—Former of all his ideas ! Ever the half-drunk poet, seeing what he will see ; not the sorrowfully languishing ; not the sternly crushing ; but the lofty, noble, powerful ! who with moderate 'thirst for the sun,' hovers to and fro in the regions of air, strives aloft, and again—*sinks* not to earth ! but plunges headlong to earth, bathes in the floods of the 'Rock-stream,' and cradles himself "in the thunder of the echoing rocks around.' His glance not the fire-glance of the eagle ! His brow and nose not the courage of the lion ! his breast—not the steadfastness of the steed that neighs for battle !

In the whole, however, there is much of the sweeping activity of the elephant . . . .”

“The drawing up of his projecting upper lip towards the overhanging nose, not sharply cut, nor angular, shows, with this closed habit of the mouth, much taste and sensibility ; the lower part of the face much sensuality, indolence, and thoughtlessness. The whole outline of the profile shows openness, honesty, humanity, but at the same time a liability to be led astray, and a high degree of good-hearted indiscreetness, which injures no one but himself. The middle line of the mouth in its repose, bespeaks a downright, planless, weakly constituted, good being ; when in motion, a tender, finely-feeling, exceedingly susceptible, benevolent, noble man. In the arch of the eyelids, and in the glance of the eyes, there sits not Homer, but the deepest, most inward, and most quick feeling, and comprehension of Homer ; not the epic, but the lyric poet ; genius, which fuses, moulds, creates, glorifies, hovers, transforms all into the heroic form, deifies all. The half-closed eyelids, from such an arch, rather indicate the finely feeling poet, than the slowly laboring artist, creating by a plan ; rather the amorous than the severe. The full face of the youth is much more taking and attractive, than the somewhat too loose, too protracted half-face ; the fore-part of the face tells in its slightest motion, of a most sensitive, careful, inventive, untaught, inward goodness, of a softly trembling, wrong-abhorring freedom—a thirsting sense of life. It cannot conceal the slightest impression from the many, which it receives at once, or wears incessantly. Every object, which sustains a near relation to him, drives the blood into the cheeks and nose ; the most maidenly blush of shame in the point of honor, spreads like lightning over the delicately moving skin.”

“The complexion is not the pale one of the all creating, all consuming genius ; not the wildly glowing one of the contemptuous destroyer ; not the milk-white one of the blond ; not the yellow one of the hard and tough ; not the brownish one of the slowly plodding worker ; but the white and red, the violet, so expressive and so unchangeable, so happily mixed, like the strength and weakness of the whole character. The soul of the whole and of each particular feature is freedom, is elastic activity,

which shoots forth easily and is easily driven back. Magnanimity and upright cheerfulness shine out of the whole fore-face and carriage of the head. Incorruptibleness of feeling, delicacy of taste, purity of mind, goodness and nobleness of soul, active power, feeling of strength and of weakness, shine so transparently through the whole face, that what were otherwise a lively self-consciousness resolves itself into a noble modesty, and the natural pride and vanity of youth without constraint or art melts with the loveliness of twilight into this easy majesty of All. The whitish hair, the length and awkwardness of form, the softness and lightness of step, the hovering gait, the flatness of the breast, the white unfurrowed brow, and various other expressions spread over the whole man a certain feminine air, by which the inward elasticity was moderated, and every intentional offence and every meanness made for ever impossible to the heart; but at the same time making it clear, that the spirited and fiery poet, with all his unaffected thirst for freedom and for setting free, was not destined to be a thorough, persistent business man, who stands firm by himself and puts his plans all through, or to become immortal in the bloody strife. And now for the first time in conclusion I remark, that I have yet said nothing of the most striking trait, nothing of the noble simplicity, free from all affectation! Nothing of the childlikeness of heart! Nothing of the entire unconsciousness of his outward nobility! Nothing of the inexpressible *bonhomie*, with which he accepts and bears reproach and warning, even accusation and wrong."

"But who can find an end, who undertakes to tell all that he sees or feels in a good man, in whom there is so much pure humanity!"

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE OLDER.

"What I have said of the younger brother—how much of it may be said also of this one! The most prominent thing which I can remark is this:

"This figure and this character are more compact and less expanded, than the former was. There all was longer and flatter, here all is shorter, more broadly arched and rounded; there

all was vague, here more precise and sharply defined. So the brow ; so the nose ; so the breast : more crowded together, more active, less diffuse, more power and life towards one aim ! For the rest, the same amiableness and *bonhomie* ! Not that striking openness, rather more of shrewdness, but at bottom, or rather in deed, the same honorable tone. The same invincible abhorrence of injustice and baseness ; the same irreconcilable hatred for all that can be called cunning and *manceuvre* ; the same unyielding spirit towards tyranny and despotism ; the same pure, incorruptible feeling for all that is noble, good, and great ; the same need of friendship and of freedom, the same sensibility and noble thirst for glory ; the same catholicity of heart for all good, wise, simple, powerful, men, renowned or unrenowned, known or misunderstood,—and the same light-hearted inconsiderateness. No ! not exactly the same. The face is sharper, more contracted, firmer ; has more inward, self-developing capacity for business and practical counsels ; more enterprising spirit, which is shown especially in the strongly prominent and fully rounded bones of the eyes. Not the all-blending, rich, pure, lofty poet's feeling ; not the ease and rapidity of the productive power in the other. But yet, and that in deeper regions, living, just, and inward. Not the airy genius of light, floating away in the morning red of heaven, and fashioning shapes there—more inward power, and perhaps less expression ! more powerful and terrible—less elegant and round ; though his pencil wants neither coloring nor enchantment. More wit and riotous humor ; droll satire, brow, nose, look—all so downward, so overhanging ; decidedly right for original and all-enlivening wit, which does not gather from without, but throws out from within. Especially is everything in this character more prominent, more angular, more aggressive, more storming ! No passive dullness, no relaxation, except in the sinking eyes, where pleasure, as well as in the brow and nose, springs forth. Otherwise, in this very brow, this compendium of all—this look indeed—there is the infallible expression of unlearned greatness ; the strength and impetuosity of manhood ; constancy, simplicity, precision !”

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After I had been obliged in Darmstadt to concede to Merk his

triumph, in that he had predicted my speedy separation from my gay companions, I found myself again in Frankfort, well received by every one, including my father, although he could not conceal his disappointment that I had not gone down to Airolo, and announced to him my arrival in Milan. All this was expressed in silence ; he did not show the slightest sympathy with those wild rocks, those lakes of mist, and dragons' nests. Not in a disputatious way, but incidentally, he gave me to understand how much it was all worth : he who had not seen Naples, had not lived.

I did not and could not avoid seeing Lili ; we maintained a tender and considerate position towards each other. I was informed that they had fully convinced her in my absence that she should separate from me, and that this was the more necessary and the more practicable, since I had sufficiently explained myself by my journey and voluntary absence. Nevertheless, the same localities in town and country, the same persons, confidentially admitted to all the past, did not leave the two without emotion—still and for ever lovers, although drawn apart in a mysterious way. It was an accursed state, which in a certain sense resembled Hades, or the meeting of the happy-unhappy dead.

There were moments when departed days seemed to revive again, but vanished instantly, like ghosts.

Friendly persons had told me in confidence, that Lili, when all the obstacles to our union were laid before her, had declared that she was ready in her love to me to renounce all her present positions and relations, and to go with me to America. America was then perhaps, still more than now, the Eldorado of all those who found themselves crossed in their momentary interests.

But the very thing which should have animated my hopes, only pressed them down. My beautiful paternal house, only a few hundred steps from hers, offered certainly a more tolerable and more attractive situation than an uncertain and remote environment beyond the ocean ; yet I do not deny, that in her presence all hopes, all wishes sprang to life again, and new uncertainties were stirring in me.

True, the injunctions of my sister were very peremptory and

precise ; with all the intelligent appreciation of which she was capable, she had not only explained the situation of things to me, but her painfully cogent letters followed up the same text still more powerfully. "It were very well," said she, "if you could not avoid it, then you would have to bear it ; such things one must *suffer* but not *choose*." Some months passed away in this most miserable of all conditions ; every circumstance had conspired against the union ; in her alone I felt, I knew, there lay a power which might have overcome all.

Both the lovers, conscious of their position, avoided all solitary interviews ; but they could not help meeting in the customary way in company. Then was the strongest trial put upon me, as every nobly-feeling soul will recognise, when I have explained myself more nearly.

We confess, in general, that in a new acquaintance, in the formation of a new attachment, the lover gladly draws a veil over the past. Growing affection troubles itself about no antecedents, and in its genial lightning-swift development, it knows nothing whether of past or future. It is true, my nearer intimacy with Lili had begun by her telling me about her early youth : how, from a child up, she had excited many an inclination and devotion, especially in strangers visiting her lively house, and how she had found her pleasure in them, though attended with no further consequences and leading to no tie.

Truly, lovers consider all that they have felt before only as preparation for their present bliss, only as the base on which the structure of their life can first be reared. Past attachments seem like spectres of the night, which glide away before the break of day. *But the...*

But what occurred ! The fair came on, and with it the whole swarm of those spectres appeared in all its actuality ; all the mercantile friends of the important house came one by one, and it was soon revealed that not a man among them was willing or able wholly to give up a certain claim to the lovely daughter. The younger ones, without being obtrusive, still appeared as familiar friends ; the middle-aged, with a certain obliging dignity, as those who make themselves beloved, and who in any case might come forward with higher claims. There were five men

among them, with the additional comfort of a substantial condition in the world.

The older gentlemen were altogether intolerable, with their uncle's manners; they could not bridle their hands, but in their disagreeable twaddle must demand a kiss, for which the cheek was not refused. It was so natural to her, gracefully to satisfy them all. The conversation excited many a thoughtful remembrance. Allusion was made to those pleasure parties by water and by land, to dangerous accidents with cheerful results, to balls and evening promenades, to the fun elicited from ridiculous wooers, and to whatever could excite an uncomfortable jealousy in the heart of an inconsolable lover, who had opened, as it were, the facet of so many years for a long time to come. But amid all this throng and motion, she did not put her friend off, and when she turned to him, she knew how to express the tenderest things in a few words, which seemed most perfectly adapted to the present case.

But let us turn from this torture, of which the memory is almost unendurable, to poesy, by which some intellectual and heartfelt alleviation was introduced into my painful situation.

"*Lili's Menagerie*" belongs to about this period; I do not add the poem here, because it does not disclose the softer sentiment of that time, but only seeks, with genial earnestness, to heighten the disagreeable, and by comical, and provoking images, to change renunciation into despair.

The *following song* expresses rather the beautiful side of that misfortune, and on that account is here inserted:

"Ye are fading, ye sweet roses,  
From my love ye never sprung;  
Bloom to him who all hope loses,  
And whose soul with grief is wrung!

"I those days remember weeping,  
Angel! when I clung to thee;  
Early to my garden creeping,  
Lurked the earliest bud to see;

"All the fruits and all the flowers,  
I would lay them at thy feet;  
While thy sweet smile blessed the hours  
Hope within the heart would beat

" Ye are fading, ye sweet roses,  
From my love ye never sprung ;  
Bloom to him who all hope loses,  
And whose soul with grief is wrung !"

The opera of "*Erwin and Elmira*" was suggested by Goldsmith's lovely little romance introduced in his "*Vicar of Wakefield*," which had given us so much pleasure in the happiest times, when we never dreamed that anything similar awaited us.

I have already introduced some poetical productions of that epoch, and I only wish they had been all preserved together. A continuous excitement in the happy season of love, heightened by the entrance of care, gave occasion to songs, which expressed throughout nothing overstrained, but always the feeling of the moment. From social songs for festivals, down to the most trifling presentation-verses, all was animated, and its feeling was shared with me by a refined company ; first glad, then sorrowful, till finally there was no height of bliss, no depth of woe, to which a strain was not devoted.

All these inward and outward events, in so far as they might have affected my father unpleasantly (for his hope grew ever less of seeing that first one, who had pleased his fancy as a step-daughter, led into his house), were put aside in the most prudent and energetic manner by my mother. But this "state-lady," as he used to call her in confidential conversation with his wife, would not suit him any way.

Nevertheless he let the matter take its course, and carried on his little Chancery as busily as ever. The young juristic friend, as well as the dexterous amanuensis, gained continually more extension of territory under his firm. As the absentee was no longer missed there, they let me take my own way, and sought more and more to establish themselves upon a ground on which I was not destined to thrive.

Fortunately my own tendencies corresponded with the sentiments and wishes of my father. He had so great an idea of my poetic talent, so much personal joy in the favor which my earliest efforts had obtained, that he often talked to me about new and further undertakings. On the other hand, I didn't venture to



tell him anything as to these social pleasantries and poems of passion.

When I had held up the mirror of a significant epoch of the world, after my way, in *Götz von Berlichingen*, I looked round carefully for another such turning-point in political history. The Revolt of the Netherlands gained my attention. In Götz, an honest man sinks under a delusion. A mighty and well-meaning spirit, in times of anarchy, is an object of some significance. In Egmont, firmly grounded institutions cannot hold out against a strong and already calculating Despotism. I had talked so earnestly with my father about what was to be done, and what I wanted to do, that it inspired him with an invincible desire to see the piece, already worked out in my head, set fairly down on paper, that it might be printed and admired.

While, as in earlier times, I still hoped to possess Lili, I had turned my whole activity to the study and practice of civil business, so now it happened, that I had to fill the fearful gully which separated me from her, with occupations of more intellect and soul. I actually began to write *Egmont*, and not, as I did the first *Götz von Berlichingen*, in succession and in order, but immediately after the first introduction I went at the main scene, without troubling myself about the variously connecting links. I made rapid progress, because, having an easy way of working (it is no exaggeration), I was spurred on by my father day and night, since he expected to see the thing executed with as much ease as it was originated.

**B O O K   T W E N T I E T H .**



## TWENTIETH BOOK.

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AND so I drove on with my Egmont ; and while I found in this some sort of alleviation to my wounded passion, the presence of a clever artist helped me over many evil hours, and thus, as often before, I owed to a vague striving after practical improvement a secret peace of mind, at a time when otherwise it could not have been hoped.

JOHN MELCHIOR KRAUS, born in Frankfort, educated in Paris, had just returned from a short journey into the north of Germany ; he visited me, and I felt at once the impulse and the need of attaching myself to him. He was a cheerful liver, whose ready and refreshing talent had found the right school in Paris.

There was a pleasant opening there at that time for the Germans ; PHILIP HACKERT lived there respected and well off ; the faithful German method by which he executed landscapes, sketched from nature, so successfully in oil and water colors, was very welcome, as the opposite of a practical manner into which the French had fallen. WILLE, highly honored as a copperplate engraver, gave some ground and bottom to the German merit ; GRIMM, already influential, helped his countrymen not a little. Pleasant excursions, or sketching immediately from nature, were undertaken, and many good things thus accomplished and prepared.

BOUCHER and WATEAU, two born artists, whose works, though fluttering in the style and spirit of the time, were always highly respectable, were inclined to the new revelation, and even actively engaged in it, though only for the sake of amusement and experiment. GREUZE, living quietly by himself in his family circle, and fond of representing such domestic scenes, delighted with his own works, held an honored and an easy pencil.

All this our KRAUS was able to take up into his own talent ; he formed himself in circle after circle, and had the power of representing family gatherings of friends, in the way of portraits, with great beauty. Not less happy was he in his landscape sketches, which cordially commended themselves to the eye by their clear outlines, massive shadows, and agreeable coloring. The inward sense was satisfied by a certain naïve truth, and especially was the friend of art pleased with his power of instantly arranging and reducing to a picture what he had sketched from nature.

He was a most agreeable companion ; cheerful equanimity accompanied him everywhere ; obliging without cringing, reserved without pride, he was everywhere at home, everywhere loved, the most active, and, at the same time, the most serviceable of all mortals. Endowed with such a character and talent, he soon won the favor of the higher circles ; he was especially well received at the castle of the Baron von Stein, at Nassau on the Lahn, where he assisted an accomplished and lovely daughter in her artistic aspirations, and enlivened the whole circle in more ways than one.

After the marriage of this excellent young lady to the Count von Werther, the newly wedded couple took the artist with them to their considerable estate in Thuringia, and thus he got to Weimar. There his acquaintance was sought, he was appreciated, and his stay desired by the highly cultivated classes.

Active as he was on all sides, my love of art, which had been contented with merely collecting, was roused into practical trials by his return to Frankfort. The neighborhood of the artist is indispensable to the Dilettante, for he sees in the former the complement of his own existence ; the wishes of the amateur are fulfilled in the artist.

By practice, joined to a certain natural talent, I succeeded perhaps in an outline, and what I saw before me in nature was easily shaped into a picture ; but I wanted the peculiar plastic power, the skilful industry, which lends a body to the outline by well-graduated light and shade. My imitations were rather distant presentiments of some form or other, and my figures like

those light airy beings in Dante's Purgatory, which, casting no shadows, fled affrighted at the shadows of actual bodies.

Through Lavater's physiognomical hunts—for so we may call the impetuous eagerness with which he urged all men, not only to the contemplation of physiognomies, but also to practical attempts at copying faces, whether in an artistic or a bungling way—I had acquired a habit of taking the portraits of friends on grey paper, with black and white chalk. The likeness was not to be mistaken, but it required the hand of my artistic friend to make them come out from the dark back-ground.

In turning over and looking through the rich portfolio which the good Kraus had brought with him from his travels, we had the sweetest conversation, when he laid before us sketches of scenes and persons in and about Weimar. On such occasions, I was glad to linger, for you may imagine that it must have flattered the young man, who saw in so many pictures only the text to a more circumstantial repetition of that memorable invitation: they would be glad to see *him* there. He would very pleasantly animate his expected greetings and invitations, by looking at these portraits of the persons. One successful oil-painting represented the chapel-master, Wolf, at the piano, and his wife behind him preparing to sing; and here the artist himself managed to suggest, in an eloquent way, how warmly this worthy pair would receive me. Among his sketches were several relating to the wood and mountain scenery about Bürgel. A brave forester, more perhaps out of love for his graceful daughters than for his own sake, had opened social promenades there through rough masses of rocks, thickets, and strips of forest, by means of bridges, balustrades, and soft paths; and you saw the ladies, in white dresses, on the pleasant ways, and not without their attendants. In one young man you might recognise Bertuch, whose serious designs upon the oldest daughter were not to be denied; and Kraus was not offended if you ventured to refer a second young man to himself, and to his budding attachment to the sister.

BERTUCH, as the disciple of Wieland, had so distinguished himself in science and in action, that already established as the private secretary of the Duke, he had the very best of prospects for the future. We talked, at length, of Wieland's rectitude,

and cheerfulness, and kindly disposition; his fine literary and poetical designs, and the influence of the *Mercur* throughout Germany, were thoroughly discussed; many names were specified in a literary, political, or social point of view, and among them, Musæus, Kirms, Berendis, and Ludecus. As to women, the wife of Wolf, and a widow Kotzebue, with a lovely daughter and a bright boy, were gloriously and characteristically drawn, along with many others. Everything pointed to a fresh and active life of literature and art.

And so, by degrees, was pictured out the element upon which the young Duke was to work on his return; the lady-protectress had prepared this state of things; but all that concerned the execution of weightier affairs was left, according to the duty of such provisional administrations, to the conviction and the practical force of the future regent. The hideous ruins caused by the burning of the palace were already looked upon as an occasion for new improvements. The suspended mining operations at Ilmenau, now made profitable again by the expensive repairs of the deep shaft, the academy at Jena, which was behind the spirit of the age somewhat, and threatened with the loss of some very able teachers, and many other circumstances, roused a noble common feeling. Men were looking around for persons, who, in the upward struggle of Germany, might be called to further such variety of good, and, throughout, the prospect seemed as fresh as powerful and lively youth could wish. And if it seemed sad to invite a young princess, without the dignity of a suitable building, into a very ordinary dwelling built for wholly different objects; still, the beautifully situated and well contrived country-houses like Ettenburg, Belvedere, and other eligible pleasure-seats, gave enjoyment for the present, and hope of productive and agreeable activity in the natural mode of life thus rendered a necessity.

In the course of this biography, we have seen how the child, the boy, the youth, has sought by different ways to approach to the Supersensual; first, looking with strong inclination to a natural religion; then, clinging with love to a positive one; and, finally, concentrating himself in the trial of his own powers, and joyfully giving himself up to the general faith. Whilst he wan-

dered to and fro, in the middle space between these regions, seeking and looking about him, much came in his way which did not seem to belong to either of them, and he believed that he saw more and more distinctly, that it is better to avoid all thought of the immense and incomprehensible.

He supposed that he detected in nature—animate and inanimate, with soul or without soul—something which was manifested only in contradictions, and which, therefore, could not be comprehended under any idea, still less under one word. It was not godlike, for it seemed unreasonable; not human, for it had no understanding; nor devilish, for it was beneficent; nor angelic, for it often betrayed a malicious pleasure. It resembled chance, for it evolved no consequences; it was like Providence, for it hinted at connexion. All that limits us it seemed to penetrate; it seemed to sport at will with the necessary elements of our existence; it contracted time and expanded space. Only in the impossible did it appear to find pleasure, while it rejected the possible with scorn.

To this principle, which seemed to step in between all other principles, to separate them, and to bind them together, I gave the name *Demonic*, after the example of the ancients and of those who had perceived the same thing. I sought to shelter myself before this fearful principle, by fleeing, as my habit was, behind an image.

Among the special parts of history which I studied with some care, were the events which made the since United Netherlands so famous. I had diligently examined the sources, and sought, as far as possible, to get my information at first hand, and to bring all living and present before me. The situations appeared to me in the highest degree dramatic, and as the principal figure, about whom the others grouped themselves most happily, Count Egmont occurred, whose human and chivalric greatness was most captivating to me.

But it was necessary to my purpose to convert him into a character possessing such peculiarities as would adorn a youth better than a man in years, an unmarried man better than the father of a family; and one independent, rather than one, who, however freely disposed, is limited by various relations.



Having thus made him youthful in my thoughts, and delivered him from all conditions, I gave him unbridled love of life, boundless self-confidence, the gift of drawing all men to himself, and so of winning the favor of the people, the silent passion of a princess, the spoken one of a young child of nature, the sympathy of a shrewd statesman, and indeed the attachment of the son of his greatest adversary.

The personal courage which distinguishes the hero is the base upon which his whole being rests, the ground and soil from which it sprung. He knows no danger, and is but dazzled by the approach of the greatest. When surrounded by enemies, we cut our way through as we can ; but it is harder to break the nets of state-policy. The Demoniactal element, which is in play on both sides, and in whose conflict the lovely falls while the hated triumphs ; and then the prospect that out of this will spring a third which shall answer to the wish of all men ; this perhaps is what has gained for the piece (not, to be sure, at its first appearance, but later and at the right time), the favor which it now enjoys. Here, therefore, for the sake of many beloved readers, I will anticipate myself, and as I know not how soon I shall have another opportunity, will express a conviction which came to me only a good while later.

Although that Demoniactal element can manifest itself in all corporeal and incorporeal things, and even expresses itself most remarkably in animals, yet it stands especially in the most wonderful connexion with man, and forms a power which, if it be not opposed to the moral order of the world, yet crosses it, so that you may regard one as the warp, and the other as the woof.

For the phenomena which it produces there are innumerable names : for all philosophies and religions have sought in prose and poetry to solve this riddle and to settle once for all the thing which still remains to them a puzzle.

But the most fearful appearance of the Demoniactal, is when it is seen predominating in some man. During my life I have had opportunity to observe several such, some near and some at a distance. They are not always the most distinguished men, either morally or intellectually, and seldom do they re-

commend themselves by goodness of heart ; but a tremendous power proceeds from them, and they exercise an incredible influence over all creatures, nay, over the elements, and who can say how far such influence will extend ? All united moral forces are of no avail against it ; in vain will the more enlightened portion of mankind call them in question as deceivers or deceived—the mass will be drawn on by them. Seldom or never do contemporaries find their equals, and they are to be overcome by nothing but by the universe itself ; and from such remarks that strange, but monstrous proverb may have risen : *Nemo contra Deum nisi Deus ipse.*

From these loftier reflections I come back to my own little life, for which strange events, clothed at least with a demoniacal appearance, were in store. From the summit of Gotthard, turning my back upon Italy, I had returned home, because I could not renounce Lili. An affection, which is grounded in the hope of mutual possession, of a perfect life-union, does not die out at once ; on the contrary, it is nourished by the consideration of the reasonable desires and honest hopes one cherishes.

It lies in the nature of the thing, that the maiden in such cases becomes reconciled before the youth. Beautiful children, as the descendants of Pandora, have the enviable gift of charming, attracting, and (more through nature with half purpose, than through inclination, and indeed with malice) of gathering men around them ; by which means they often are in danger, like the Magician's Apprentice, of being frightened by the flood of their adorers. And, finally, a choice must here be made ; one must be exclusively preferred ; one must lead home the bride.

And how accidentally is the choice guided and the selecting maid determined ! I had renounced Lili from conviction, but love made me suspect my own conviction. Lili had taken leave of me with the same understanding, and I had commenced the beautiful journey to distract my mind, but it produced the opposite effect.

As long as I was absent I believed in the separation, but did not believe in the renunciation. All memories, hopes, and wishes, had a free play. Now I came back, and as the re-union of those

who freely and joyfully love each other is a heaven, so the meeting again of two persons only separated through rational grounds is an intolerable purgatory, a forecourt of hell. When I came back into the sphere of Lili, I felt all those dissonances doubled which had disturbed our relation ; when I stood once more before her, it fell heavily upon my heart that she was lost.

Accordingly I resolved at once on flight, and there was nothing therefore which I could desire more, than that the young ducal pair of Weimar should come from Carlsruhe to Frankfort, and that I, according to the invitations I had from time to time, should follow them to Weimar. Their majesties had always maintained a gracious and indeed confiding manner towards me, which I, on my part returned with passionate thanks. My attachment to the Duke from the first moment ; my reverence for the princess whom I had so long known, although only by reputation ; my desire to render personally some friendly service to Wieland, who had acted so liberally towards me, and to atone upon the spot for my half wilful, half accidental improprieties, were motives enough to charm and even to compel a youth held back now by no passion. To this was added, that I had to flee from Lili, take which way I would, whether to the South, where the daily narrations of my father had pictured out before me the most glorious heaven of Art and Nature, or to the North, whither so significant a circle of distinguished men invited me.

The young princely pair had now reached Frankfort on their return. The Court of the Duke of Meiningen was there at the same time, and by him too, as well as by the Privy Counsellor von Dürkheim, who accompanied the young prince, I was received in the friendliest manner. But lest there should be wanting some singular event, according to the habit of my youth, a misunderstanding threw me into an incredible, although a tolerably cheerful dilemma.

The majesties of Weimar and of Meiningen lived in one hotel. I was invited to dine. The Court of Weimar so preoccupied my mind, that it did not occur to me to inquire any further, since I had not the presumption to imagine that any notice would be taken of me on the side of Meiningen. I go well dressed to the Roman Emperors, find the chambers of the Weimar family

empty, and being informed that they are with those of Meiningen, I betake myself thither and am kindly received. I conjecture that this is a forenoon visit, or perhaps that they are about to dine together, and I await the issue. But suddenly the Weimar suite sets itself in motion, which I also follow ; but instead of going into their own apartments they go straight down stairs into their chariots, and I find myself alone in the street.

Now, instead of inquiring into the thing, and seeking some solution in an adroit and prudent manner, I went in my determined way straight home, where I found my parents at supper. My father shook his head, while my mother sought to excuse me as much as possible. She informed me in the evening, that my father had said, after I had gone, that he wondered very much how I, generally acute enough, would not see that they only wished to taunt and shame me in that quarter. But this could not move me : for I had already met Herr von Dürkheim, who had mildly brought sundry graceful and humorous charges against me. I had now awakened from my dream, and had an opportunity to thank them handsomely for the favor extended to me contrary to my hope and expectation, and to ask forgiveness.

After I had accepted these so friendly offers, from good grounds, the following arrangement was made. A cavalier who stayed behind in Carlsruhe, to wait for a landau wagon made in Strasburg, was to meet me on a certain day in Frankfort, and I was to hold myself in readiness to set off at once with him for Weimar. The cheerful and gracious farewell which I received from the young sovereigns, the friendly conduct of the courtiers, made me covet this journey highly, for which the road seemed to smoothe itself so pleasantly.

But here, too, by accident, such a simple arrangement became complicated, confused by my passionate impatience, and almost wholly annihilated ; for after I had taken leave of everybody, and announced the day of my departure, after I had packed up in haste, not forgetting my unprinted manuscripts, I waited for the hour which was to bring along the aforesaid friend in the new chariot and to carry me into a new country, into new relations. The hour passed, and the day also ; and since, to avoid a second leave-taking and the being overrun with visits, I had given my-

self out as absent from that morning, I was obliged to keep still in the house, in my own chamber, and thus found myself in a peculiar situation.

But since solitude and narrow space were always favorable to me, since I was compelled to make such hours useful, I went to writing on my Egmont, and brought it almost to a close. I read it over to my father, who acquired a peculiar liking to this piece, and who wished nothing more than to see it done and printed, since he hoped that it would add to the good fame of his son. He needed something of this sort to quiet him, and make him contented ; for he made the shrewdest comments on the staying away of the chariot. He maintained the whole thing to be a mere invention, would not believe in any new landau, and pronounced the cavalier who stayed behind to be a phantom of the air. All this he gave me to understand only indirectly ; but he tormented himself and my mother the more fully, that he regarded the whole thing as a piece of court pleasantry, which they had practised upon me in consequence of my improprieties, and in order to sicken and to shame me, instead of the expected honor, letting me sit disgraced.

As to myself, I held fast to my faith at first ; congratulated myself upon these solitary hours, disturbed by neither friends nor strangers, nor by any sort of social distraction ; and wrote on vigorously, though not without inward agitation, at my Egmont. And this frame of mind perhaps was good for the piece itself, which, moved by so many passions, could not very well have been written by a person entirely passionless.

So passed eight days, and I know not how many more, and this complete imprisonment began to become irksome to me. For many years accustomed to live under the free sky, associated with friends with whom I stood in the frankest and busiest mutual relations, in the neighborhood of one beloved, from whom indeed I had resolved to part, but who, so long as it was possible for me to approach her, drew me powerfully to herself,—all this began to make me so uneasy, that the attractive power of my tragedy threatened to diminish, and its poetic creative power to be suspended through my impatience. For several evenings now it had not been possible for me to remain at home. Disguised in a

large mantle, I crept round the city, passing the houses of my friends and acquaintances, and not forbearing to walk up to Lili's window. She lived on the ground-floor of a corner house; the green shades were down, but I could easily remark that the lights stood in their usual places. Soon I heard her singing at the piano; it was the song, *Ah! against my will why dost thou press me!* which had been written for her hardly a year before. It seemed to me she sang with more expression than ever; I could understand it clearly word for word; I had pressed my ear as closely as the convex lattice would permit. After she had sung it through, I saw by the shadow which fell upon the curtain that she had arisen; she walked back and forth, but I sought in vain to catch the outline of her lovely person through the thick net-work. Nothing but the firm resolve to tear myself away, not to oppress her by my presence, but actually to renounce her, and the thought of how strange an impression would be made by my re-appearance, could have determined me to leave so dear a neighborhood.

Several more days passed away, and the conjecture of my father gained more and more probability, since there came not even a letter from Carlsruhe to explain the reasons of the delay. My poetic labors came to a stand-still, and then my father had fair game in the uneasiness with which I was internally distracted. He represented to me, that it was now too late to change the thing, that my trunk was packed, and he would give me money and credit to go to Italy; but I must decide quickly. Doubting and hesitating in such a weighty affair, I finally agreed that if, by a certain hour, neither chariot nor message came I would set out, and first to Heidelberg; from there, however, not through Switzerland again, but rather the Grisons, or the Tyrol, over the Alps.

Strange things indeed must happen, if a planless youth, which is so easily misled, is also driven upon a false way by a passionate error of age. But it is characteristic of youth and life that we first learn to see through the tactics when the campaign is over. In the mere course of business such an accident were easily enough explained; but we are too ready to conspire with error against what is naturally probable, just as

we shuffle the cards before we deal them round, in order that chance may have its full share in the thing ; and precisely thus arises the element in which, and upon which, the Demoniactal so loves to work ; and it works with us only so much the worse, as we have more anticipation of its approach.

The last day had passed, and the next morning I was to set out on my journey ; and now I felt infinitely moved to see my friend Passavant again, who had just returned out of Switzerland, and who would really have had reason to be offended if I had violated our intimate confidence by keeping myself entirely secret. I sent him an anonymous note, therefore, requesting him to meet me by night at a certain place, where I arrived first, enveloped in my mantle ; but he did not fail, and if he wondered at the appointment, he must have wondered still more at the person whom he met. The joy was equal to the astonishment, conversation and counsel were not to be thought of, he wished me success on my Italian journey, we parted, and the next day I saw myself, in good season, on the mountain road.

I had several reasons for going to Heidelberg ; one was a matter of calculation, for I had heard that the Weimar friend would come through Heidelberg from Carlsruhe ; and so, when we reached the post, I left a note which was to be handed to a cavalier who should pass through in the way described ; the second reason was one of passion, and related to my earlier ties to Lili. In short, Mademoiselle Delf, who had been the confidante of our attachment, and indeed the mediator of a serious alliance with the parents, lived there ; and I prized it as the greatest good fortune, before I left Germany, to be able to talk over those happy times with a worthy, patient, and indulgent friend.

I was well received, and introduced into many families ; among others, the family of the high warden of the forests, Von W . . . , particularly pleased me. The parents were dignified and easy persons, and one of the daughters resembled Frederica. It was just the time of grape-gathering, the weather beautiful, and all my Alsacian feelings revived in the beautiful valley of the Rhine and Neckar. This time I had experienced much that was strange in myself and others, but it was all as yet in an incipient state, no result of life had shaped itself in me, and the Infinite, of which

I had a recognition, confused me much more. But, in society, I was as ever, possibly even more, agreeable and entertaining. Here, under this free heaven, among joyous men, I sought again the old sports which never lose their novelty and charm to youth. With an earlier and not yet extinguished love in my heart, I excited sympathy without seeking it, even when I was silent about it, and thus I soon became at home in this circle, and indeed necessary to it, and I forgot that after talking away a couple of evenings I had resolved to continue my journey.

Mademoiselle Delf was one of those persons who, without exactly intriguing, always wishes to have some business, in employing others, and carrying through now this now another object. She had conceived a sincere friendship for me; and could prevail on me the more easily to tarry longer, since I lived in her house, where she offered all manner of inducements for my stay, and raised all manner of obstacles to my journey. When I wanted to turn the conversation upon Lili, she was not so pleasant and sympathizing as I had hoped. She rather praised our mutual resolution of separating, under the circumstances, and maintained that one must submit himself to the unavoidable, banish the impossible from his mind, and look around him for some new interest in life. Full of plans as she was, she had not wished to leave this to accident, but had already formed a project for my future conduct, from which I clearly saw that her last invitation to Heidelberg had not been so purposeless as it appeared.

The Electoral Prince, Charles Theodore, who had done so much for the arts and sciences, resided still at Mannheim, and precisely because the court was Catholic but the country Protestant, the latter party had every reason to strengthen itself by vigorous and hopeful men. Now I must go, in God's name, to Italy, and there form my views of Art; meanwhile, they would labor for me, it would soon show itself on my return, whether the budding affection of Fräulein von W . . . . had grown or become extinct, and whether it would be politic, through an alliance with a respectable family, to establish myself and my fortunes in a new fatherland.



All this, to be sure, I did not reject ; but my planless nature could not wholly harmonize with the scheming spirit of my friend ; I enjoyed the kindly feeling of the moment, Lili's image floated before me, waking and dreaming, and mingled with everything else which could have given me pleasure or distraction. But now I summoned before my soul the serious import of my great travelling plan, and I resolved to set myself free in a gentle and agreeable way, and in a few days resume my route.

Until late in the night had Mademoiselle Delf been unfolding to me her plans, and all that they were disposed to do for me, and I could not but gratefully respect such sentiments, although the scheme of strengthening a certain circle, through me and my possible influence at court, was not to be mistaken. We separated about one o'clock. I had slept not long, but soundly, when I was awakened by the horn of a postilion who was stopping before the house. Immediately Mademoiselle Delf appeared with a light and a letter in her hands, and stepped before my bed. "Here we have it," she exclaimed ; "read and tell me what it is. Surely it comes from the Weimar people. If it is an invitation do not follow it, but call to mind our conversation." I asked her for the light, and for a quarter of an hour's solitude. She left me reluctantly. Without opening the letter, I looked before me for a while. The express came from Frankfort, I knew the seal and hand ; the friend then had arrived there ; he invited, and our own want of faith, and incredulity, had made us act prematurely. Why should one not wait, in a quiet civilized place, for a man who had been announced distinctly, but whose journey might be delayed by so many accidents ? The scales fell from my eyes. All the kindness, the graciousness, the confidence of the past came up livingly before me, and I was almost ashamed of my strange side-leap. I opened the letter, and all had happened naturally enough. My missing guide had waited for the new chariot which was to come from Strasburg, day after day, hour after hour, as we had waited for him ; then for business' sake he had come by way of Mannheim to Frankfort, and to his dismay had not found me there. He sent the hasty letter by

express, proposing that I should instantly return, after the error was explained, and save him from the shame of going to Weimar without me.

Much as my understanding and my mind inclined me to this side, there was still no lack of a weighty counterpoise in favor of my new direction. My father had laid out a fine plan of travel for me, and had given me a little library, which should prepare and guide me on the spot. In leisure hours I had had no other entertainment, and, indeed, during my last little journey in the coach, had thought of nothing else. Those glorious objects which, from my youth up, I had learned to know through narratives and imitations of all sorts, gathered before my soul, and I knew of nothing so desirable as to approach them, while I withdrew decidedly from Lili.

In the meantime, I had dressed myself and was walking up and down in my chamber. My earnest hostess entered. "What shall I hope?" she cried. "Dearest madam," said I, "say no more to me, I am determined to return; the grounds of that conclusion I have weighed by myself, to repent them would be fruitless. The resolution must be taken finally, and who should take it but the person whom it most concerns?"

I was moved, and so was she; and there was a serious scene, which I cut short by ordering my servant to engage the post-coach. In vain I begged my hostess to quiet herself, and to turn the mock-departure which I took of the company the evening before to a real one; to consider that it was only a visit, a postponement for a short time; that my Italian journey was not given up, and my return that way was not precluded. She would hear of nothing, and she disquieted her friend, already deeply moved, still more. The coach stood before the door; everything was packed; the postilion gave the usual signs of impatience; I tore myself away; she would not let me go, and brought up all the arguments of the present with so much art, that finally, impassioned and inspired, I shouted out the words of Egmont:

"Child! child! no more! lashed as by invisible spirits, the sun-steeds of time rush onward with the light car of our destiny,

and nothing remains to us but bravely and composedly to hold fast the reins, and now to the right, now to the left, here from a rock, there from a precipice, to avert the wheels. Whither he is going, who can tell? Scarcely can he remember whence he came!"

## NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

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THE Third and Fourth Parts, respectively, of this Autobiography have been translated, in the first place, by my friends, CHARLES A. DANA and JOHN S. DWIGHT, whose attainments, as scholars, ensure the general accuracy of the work. The Editor has, besides, carefully gone over every word with the original before him, in order to give uniformity to the style, as far as it might be found necessary, and to correct any errors that may have been accidentally overlooked. He believes, therefore, that the translation is at least faithful.

It was his design to have appended a series of notes, explanatory of the names and allusions that occur in the work, but after having prepared a good deal of his matter, he found that the plan, treated in any satisfactory way, would swell the book to an undesirable size.

Goethe's Life is, in the present volume, only brought down to the period of his going to reside in Weimar. It is continued, however, in other works, such as the "*Annals, or Day and Year Book*," the "*Italian Journey*," and his Correspondences with Schiller and Zelter. Should the success of this attempt warrant the undertaking, these, or some of them at least, will be presented to the public in due time.



